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HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

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Harvard College

HISTORY OF THE JEWS,

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO
THE PRESENT DAY.

BY

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HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

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THE DECAY OF JUDÆA, AND THE JEWS IN DISPERSION.

The Zendik Religion—King Kobad and Mazdak the Reformer—Revolt of the Jews—Mar-Zutra—Revival of the Schools—The Saburaïm—The Talmud written down—Tolerance of Chosru II.—The Christianisation of Judæa—The Jews under Byzantine Rule—Justinian—Persecution of the Samaritans—Benjamin of Tiberias—Attack on Tyre—The Emperor Heraclius.

500-628 C.E.

HARDLY had the Jews recovered a little from the long and horrible persecution to which they had been the victims under King Firuz, when they were overtaken by fresh storms, which continued their ravages for three centuries. Firuz had been followed by his brother, who only reigned a short time. This latter was succeeded by Kobad (Kovad, Cabades), a weak king, who was not without his good qualities, but who allowed himself to become the tool of a fanatic, and was prevailed upon to institute religious persecutions. There arose under this monarch a man who was desirous of reforming the religion of the Magi, and of making it the ruling faith. Mazdak, for that was the name of the reformer of Magianism, believed that he had discovered a means of promoting the promised victory of Light over Darkness, of Ahura-Mazda over Angromainyus. He considered that greed for property and lust after strange women were the cause

of all that is bad in man. He desired therefore to abolish these evils, and to introduce the community of property and of women, notwithstanding all ties of relationship. In Mazdak's opinion it was on the foundation of communistic equality that the edifice of Zoroaster's doctrine could most safely be raised. As he led a virtuous and ascetic life, and was very earnest in his endeavours to reform, he soon succeeded in gaining numerous adherents (about the year 501), who availed themselves of this advantageous freedom, and called themselves Zendik, or true believers of the Zend. King Kobad became Mazdak's faithful disciple, and supported him in his efforts. He issued a decree commanding all the inhabitants of the Persian empire to accept Mazdak's reforms, and to live in accordance therewith. The lower classes behaved as the most zealous of Zendiks, appropriating to themselves the possessions of the rich and such of the women as pleased them. There thus arose a confusion between the ideas of right and wrong, virtue and vice, such as had never yet been known in the history of nations. The Persian nobles dethroned this communistic king and threw him into prison; but when Kobad escaped from confinement, and was again placed in possession of his dominions with the aid of the Huns, they were unable to prevent Mazdak's adherents from renewing their misconduct, so that many children born during Kobad's reign did not know their own father, and no one could be certain of the peaceful enjoyment of his property.

The Jews and Christians were naturally not exempt from the torments of this extravagant folly, and although only the rich suffered from the robbery of the Zendiks, now become legal, the community of women struck a terrible blow at all. Chastity and sacredness of marriage were virtues which had always been cherished by the Jews, and they had become even more deeply rooted in their

natures by the action of the Talmudical law. They could not endure the notion that their wives and maidens should be exposed to violation at any moment, and that the purity of their families, which they treasured as the apple of their eye, should be threatened. They appear therefore to have opposed an armed resistance to the shameless attacks of the Zendiks on chastity. An insurrection of the Jews, which broke out at this period, was organised in all probability as a means of remaining free from this intolerable innovation. At the head of this insurrection stood Mar-Zutra II., the youthful Prince of the Captivity, who must have been a most extraordinary personage, for his birth and deeds were embellished by fable with wonderful details.

Mar-Zutra (born about 496) was the son of Huna, a learned prince of the captivity, who, after the death of the tyrant Firuz, was invested with that dignity (488-508). At the time of his father's death Mar-Zutra was still a young boy. During the period of his minority the office of Prince of the Captivity was held by Pachda, his sister's husband, who does not seem to have been inclined to abandon this dignity to the lawful heir. Mar-Zutra's grandfather, Mar-Chanina, betook himself therefore, in company with his grandson, to the court of the Persian king, probably Kobad, and obtained, presumably by means of valuable presents, Pachda's deposition and Mar-Zutra's investiture (about 511). It was this young prince who now arose, sword in hand, to protect his brethren; the immediate cause of the insurrection is said to have been the violent death of Mar-Isaac, a principal of the schools. Mar-Zutra's troops consisted of four hundred Jewish warriors, with whose help he probably succeeded in expelling Mazdak's rapacious and lustful adherents from the territory of Jewish Babylonia, and in repelling a shameless invasion of the most holy of rights. He is further related to have accomplished

such brilliant feats of arms, that the troops which had been sent by the king to quell the insurrection were unable to get near him. Mar-Zutra is even said to have gained his independence, and to have laid the non-Jewish inhabitants of Babylonia under tribute. Machuza, near Ctesiphon, became the capital of a small Jewish state, in which the Prince of the Captivity ruled like a king.

The independence thus conquered by Mar-Zutra, lasted nearly seven years; the Jewish army was finally overcome by the superior numbers of the Persian host, and the Prince of the Captivity was taken prisoner. He and his aged grandfather, Mar-Chanina, were executed, and their corpses nailed to the cross on the bridge of Machuza (about 520). The inhabitants of this town were stripped of their possessions and led into captivity, and it is probable that the limits of the persecution were much further extended. The members of the family of the Prince of the Captivity were compelled to take to flight, and escaped to Judæa, whither they brought with them Mar-Zutra's posthumous heir; this latter also bore the name of Mar-Zutra, and was distinguished for his erudition in Judæa, where he was brought up. Thus Kobad's persecution abolished the office of Prince of the Captivity in Babylonia for some time. The Talmudical academies were also closed, for the teachers of the Law were persecuted, and compelled to hide. Two men of authority were fugitives, Ahunai and Giza, the latter of whom settled on the river Zab. Other fugitives may have directed their steps towards Palestine or Arabia. Kobad's revenge for an insurrection provoked by fanaticism, had dealt so severe a blow at the historical life of the Babylonian Jews which throbbed in the two academies of Sora and Pumbeditha, that it was some time before it was able to recover therefrom. Meanwhile the persecution does not appear to have extended over the whole of Persia, for

Jewish soldiers served in the Persian army which fought against the Greek General Belisarius, and the Persian captain had so great a regard for them, that he requested a truce in order that they might enjoy peace during the feast of Passover.

After Kobad's death, the persecution of the Babylonian Jews ceased of its own accord; for although his successor, Chosroes Nushirvan, was not well-disposed towards them, and imposed a poll-tax both upon them and the Christians, from which only children and old men were exempt, this must not be regarded as a sign of intolerance and hate, but rather as a means of filling the Imperial treasury. As soon as peace was again restored, the representatives of the Babylonian Jews hastened to re-establish the institutions, to set the academies going again, and, to a certain extent, to re-connect the broken links of the chain of tradition.

The fugitive Giza, who had remained in hiding on the river Zab, was recalled to Sora to occupy the principal's chair; the sister academy at Pumbeditha chose Semuna as its head. Still a third name of this period is famous, that of Rabaï of Rob (near Nahardea), whose position and office are, however, doubtful. These men, with their subordinate associates and disciples, found nothing of more importance to do than to devote their whole activity to the Talmud. It was the sole object of attention to all thinking and pious men of that period, while at the same time it satisfied religious zeal and ambition, promoted tranquillity of mind, was the means of acquiring fame, and furthered spiritual and secular objects. The persecution of the Law made it all the dearer and holier; the Talmud was a sacred banner for the entire nation, around which they gathered.

But the disciples of the last Amoraïm had lost all creative power, and were unable to develop the Talmud any further. The subject-matter and

the method of teaching were both so definitely settled, that they were incapable of extension or amplification. The study of the Talmud had come to an even longer standstill than it had hitherto experienced. The principals of the schools contented themselves, therefore, with adhering to the ancient custom of assembling the students of the Talmud around them in the months of Adar (March), and Ellul (September), when they handed over to them the subject of tradition, initiated them into the course of lectures and gave them themes for private study. They also settled, according to certain rules, many points of religious practice concerning the ritual and the civil and marriage codes, which, up till then, had remained unsettled, or concerning which a variety of opinions reigned in the different academies. The immeasurable contents of the Talmud, which discussions and controversies had deprived of all definiteness, were to be rendered available for practical use. For it was necessary that fluctuation and uncertainty should cease, if it was desired that religious life should not fall into decay. The judges also needed a fixed rule by which they could decide cases which came before them, and all men stood in need of unquestionable precepts by which to regulate their conduct. From this aspect of their activity, namely the establishment of the religious and judicial practice, after considering the questions in all their bearings, the post-Amoraic teachers received the name of Sabureans (Saburai) because, after passing in review the various opinions (Sebara), they finally settled upon the binding decision. The Sabureans, whose labours began immediately after the completion of the Talmud, and were continued by Giza, Semuna and their associates, followed a practical, rather than a theoretical tendency. As regards theory they placed no confidence in themselves.

The Saburean principals, Giza and Semuna, made it their first business to commit the Talmud to writing. They availed themselves partly of the oral tradition, partly of written notes made by various persons for their own use as an aid to the memory.

As everything which proceeded from the Amoraic authorities appeared of importance to their successors, every utterance, every anecdote which was current in learned circles was readily accepted, so that posterity might not be deprived of the fulness of wisdom, as it was considered. Additions were made for the purpose of explaining obscure passages. It was in this form, as edited by the Sabureans, that the contemporary communities and posterity received the Talmud.

Besides the great interest felt in the Talmud, there now arose a desire to comprehend the grammatical structure of the Hebrew language, the organ by which Holy Writ was expressed. Impelled by this study the seven wise men of Greece, who had emigrated to Persia when the school of philosophy at Athens was closed under the Emperor Justinian, were received by Nushirvan, and roused the Persians to a love of knowledge. The Christian priests in Edessa and Garib-Sapor devoted themselves to the study of the grammar of the Syrian language, which was the language of the Church in Mesopotamia and Elymais (Chusistan). The Jewish exponents of Holy Writ learnt from the Syrians how to make observations regarding the use of the Hebrew language. It was an insignificant beginning for the growth of the Hebrew grammar.

The names of the immediate successors of Giza and Semuna have not been preserved either by the chronicles or tradition; they were forgotten in the persecution with which the academies were again visited. In this century Magianism contended

with Christianity for the palm of intolerance. Judaism was an abomination to both, and the priests of two religions, of which the one promised to the world the victory of light, the other brotherly love, used weak kings as their tools to effect horrible persecutions.

Chosroes Nushirvan's son, Hormisdas (Ormuz) IV. was unlike his great father in every point. His tutor and counsellor Abuzurj-Mihir, the Persian Seneca, is said to have invented the game of chess for this weakly monarch, in order to render manifest to him the dependence of the king on the army and the people. During this philosopher's lifetime Hormisdas refrained from showing his true character, but immediately upon his retirement the Nero-like nature of this king broke out, and over-stepped the bounds of prudence and moderation.

Led by the Magi, who attempted to arrest the approaching overthrow of their religion by persecuting the adherents of other beliefs, he gave vent to his wrath upon the Jews and Christians of his empire. The Talmudical academies in Sora and Pumbaditha were closed, and many of the teachers of the Law again emigrated (about 581), as had happened previously under Firuz and Kobad. They settled in Firuz-Shabur, not far from Nahardea, which town, being governed by an Arabian prince, was less exposed to attacks. They continued their labours in Firuz-Shabur, and new academies arose in that town, the most distinguished of which was that of Mari.

Meanwhile Hormisdas' cruel reign did not last long; the Persians became dissatisfied and inimical, and the political enemies of Persia penetrated on all sides into its territory, and appropriated portions of the country. The empire of the Sassanians would have fallen under the attacks of a lucky conqueror, had it not been saved from ruin by the efforts of a

brave general, Bahram Tshubin. But when in his blindness the foolish monarch went so far as to reward the deliverer of his country with ingratitude and to dismiss him, Bahram rose against the unworthy king, dethroned him, and threw him into prison, where he was afterwards murdered (589). At first, for the sake of appearances, Bahram governed in the name of Prince Chosru; but eventually he threw off the mask, and himself ascended the Persian throne. The Jews of Persia and Babylonia hailed their deliverer in Bahram. He was for them what two centuries previously the emperor Julian had been for the Jews of the Roman empire. He relieved them from the oppression with which they were afflicted, and favoured their endeavours. For this reason they espoused his cause with great devotion, assisted him with money and troops, and were a support to his disputed throne; without them it is probable that he would have experienced great difficulty in retaining it for any length of time.

After a short period of irresolution the Persian nation bestowed its sympathy on Chosru, the lawful heir to the throne; the army alone remained for the most part faithful to Bahram, and the Jews, doubtless, provided for the maintenance and payment of the troops. The re-opening of the academies in Sora and Pumbaditha stands in causal connection with the attachment which the Persian Jews evinced for this ruler. Chanan of Iskia returned from Firuz-Shabur to Pumbaditha, and restored the ancient academical organization; it is also probable that the academy of Sora, which enjoyed by far the greater repute, appointed a principal at this time, although the name of any such head is not mentioned in the chronicles.

Bahram's rule did not, however, continue long. The Byzantine emperor, Mauritius, to whom the fugitive prince Chosru had fled, despatched an

army to his aid, and the Persians who had remained loyal attached themselves to it in order to depose Bahram. The Jews paid for their adherence to the usurper with their lives. On the occasion of the capture of Machuza, which town possessed a numerous Jewish population, the Persian general Mebodes put the greater part to the sword. They probably fared no better in the other cities where Chosru's victorious army penetrated. Bahram's army was vanquished, and he himself compelled to take refuge with the Huns. Chosru II., surnamed Firuz, ascended the throne of his ancestors. This prince, who was as just as he was humane, resembled his grandfather Nushirvan rather than Hormisdas, his father; he wisely abstained from making the Jews atone for their participation in the revolt. Throughout his long reign (590-628) the two academies enjoyed an uninterrupted prosperity. Chanan was succeeded by Mari bar Mar, who had founded an academy in Firuz-Shabur, while in Sora the office of principal was filled during the same period by a teacher of similar name, Mar bar Huna (609 to about 620); during this period the Jews of Palestine suffered fresh conquests and reverses. Their successors are also known: Chaninaï in Pumbaditha and Chananya in Sora; they lived to see the victorious advance of the Arabs and the fall of the Persian rule. The last of the Sassanian kings, of whom there were ten in the short period of twelve years, had not leisure enough to occupy themselves with the Jewish population of their shattered empire. The Jewish community in Babylonia continued therefore to exist in its ancient order, and again placed a Prince of the Captivity at its head. In the half-century between the re-opening of the academies under Bahram and the time of the Arabs (589-640) three Resh-Galutas are mentioned by name: Kafnaï, Chaninaï, and Bostanaï. The

last of these belongs to the ensuing epoch; aided by favourable circumstances he succeeded in again investing the dignity of Prince of the Captivity with substantial power.

The position of the Jews in Judæa during the sixth century was so terrible that a cessation of intellectual pursuits ensued as a necessary consequence. Their political situation, like that of their co-religionists of the Byzantine empire, was oppressed; the laws of Theodosius the younger remained in strength and were enforced anew by Justinus I. The Jews were excluded from all posts of honour, and were forbidden to build new synagogues. The successors of this emperor, as narrow-minded as he and even harder of disposition, enforced the anti-Jewish laws with strict severity. The spirit which animated the rulers of the eastern empire against the Jews is shown by a sentence emanating from the Emperor Zeno, the Isaurian upstart. In Antioch, where, as in all the great cities of the Byzantine empire there existed the stadium and the factions of the two colours, blue and green, one of those riots which seldom ended without bloodshed, had been raised by the opposing parties. Upon this occasion the partisans of the green had murdered many Jews among their other victims, had thrown their corpses to the flames, and burnt down their synagogues. When the Emperor Zeno was informed of this occurrence, he exclaimed that the sole fault of the partisans of the green was that they had only burnt the dead Jews, and not the living ones as well! The bigoted populace, whom the disputes of the clergy and the colour factions had demoralised, saw in their ruler's hatred of the Jews a tacit invitation to vent their rage upon them. The inhabitants of Antioch had always been ill-affected towards the Jews. When, therefore, a notorious charioteer of Constantinople, Calliopas by name, came to Antioch, attached

himself to the party of the green, and occasioned a riot, the Jews again experienced the brutal barbarity of this faction. Its partisans repaired to Daphne, near Antioch, in order to celebrate some festival, and there, without any sufficient motive, they destroyed the synagogue and its sanctuaries and barbarously murdered the worshippers (507).

Meanwhile how much of the land of their fathers still remained in the hands of the Jews? Christianity had made itself completely master of Judæa, and had become the heir of Judaism. While the former masters of the Holy Land were subject to all sorts of persecution whenever they attempted to repair a dilapidated synagogue, churches and monasteries arose everywhere in the land. Bishops, abbots, and monks domineered over Palestine, and turned it into a theatre of dogmatic wrangling over the simple or dual nature of Christ. Jerusalem had ceased to be a centre for the Jews; it had become a thoroughly Christian city, possessed an archbishop, and was completely inaccessible to its true sons. The prohibition forbidding Jews to enter the holy city, which had been renewed by Constantine, continued to exist after the death of Julian, and was most rigorously enforced by the authorities. Tiberias alone, the stately city on the lake, still maintained its academical rank, and presided over by Mar-Zutra II. and his descendants, thus became a centre, exercising authority over the Jews of other countries. Even the Jewish king of Arabia voluntarily submitted to the exhortations which came to him from Tiberias. But Christianity had acquired a hold even there, and Tiberias was also the seat of a bishopric. The mountain cities of Galilee were inhabited by Jews, who probably followed the same occupations as their forefathers, namely agriculture and the cultivation of the olive.

Nazareth, the cradle of Christianity, where the

most beautiful women in all Palestine were to be found, seems to have been mostly populated by Jewish inhabitants, as it was not raised to the rank of a bishopric. Scythopolis also (Bethsan), which became the capital of *Palæstina Secunda*, during this century, and Neapolis (Shechem), the capital of the Samaritans since Samaria had become Christian, had their Jewish population. But in all these cities, with the exception of Nazareth, the Jews only seem to have formed the minority, and insignificant in comparison with the numerous Christian population.

There probably existed an educational system among the Jews of Palestine, but it must have been poor and unimportant, as, with the exception of Mar-Zutra, not even the name of any teacher is known. Until the time of Justinian the Jews of Palestine and the Byzantine empire, whatever may have been their civil disabilities, enjoyed at least complete religious liberty: the emperors did not interfere in domestic affairs. Justinian was the emperor who first imposed even greater civil restrictions, and laid them under restraints of conscience. It was he who promulgated the disgraceful law that no credence was to be given to the testimony of Jewish witnesses against Christians, and that they were only admissible against one another (532). The Jews were privileged, however, as compared with the Samaritans, whose evidence was of no weight whatever, and who were not even allowed to dispose of their property by will. This was an act of revenge against the Samaritans, who had risen several times in revolt against the imperial power, and on one occasion had set up a king in the person of Julian ben Sabar (about 530). As the Jews had not taken part in this insurrection, they were to a certain extent privileged over the Samaritans. Meanwhile, however, Justinian also published an anti-Jewish law. Although the Jews

and Samaritans were excluded, like all heretics, from posts of honour, they were obliged by an enactment to assume the onerous and expensive decurionate (magisterial office), without being permitted, however, to enjoy the privileges attaching to it (exemption from exile and flogging). “They shall bear the yoke, although they sigh under it; but they shall be deemed unworthy of every honour” (537).

Justinian was one of those rulers who, in spite of intrinsic narrowness of mind and wickedness, desire, nevertheless, to have their own opinions on religious matters, and to assert them without regard for their subjects’ peace of mind. Justinian wished to carry through his views concerning the Christian celebration of Easter, and he therefore forbade the Jews to celebrate the Passover before the Easter of the Christians. The governors of the Provinces had strict orders to enforce this prohibition. Thus, as often as the Jewish feast of the Passover preceded the Christian Easter in the year before leap-year, the Jews incurred heavy money fines for holding divine service and eating unleavened bread (about 540).

Other invasions were also made by Justinian on the territory of religious affairs. A Jewish congregation, probably in Constantinople or Cæsarea, had been disunited for some time. One party wished that the portions of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, which were read out, should be accompanied by a translation, in the Greek language, for the benefit of the illiterate, and of the women. The pious members, on the other hand, especially the teachers of the Law, entertained an aversion to the employment of the language of their tormentors and the Church in divine service, probably also on the ground that no room would have been left for the Agadic exposition. The dispute became so violent that the Grecian party laid it before the emperor, and

appealed to him, as judge, in the last instance. Naturally, with his peculiar views, Justinian could only pronounce judgment in favour of the Greek translation. He therefore recommended the Jews to make use of the Septuagint or of Aquila's translation for divine service. He also commanded that the lessons from the Holy Scriptures should always be translated into other languages, such as Latin in the Italian provinces. Thus far Justinian was in the right. It is true that he also prohibited the adherents of the old liturgy, under threat of corporal chastisement, from excommunicating the Grecian party or party of innovation. But even this might perhaps be regarded as an act of justice, as the emperor desired to guarantee liberty in matters connected with the liturgy. But another clause of the same rescript proves unmistakably that he had only consulted the interests of the Church in this matter, being under the delusion that the use of a Greek translation in the synagogal services, and especially of the Septuagint, which had been adapted to suit the purpose of Christianity, would have the effect of winning over the Jews to the Christian faith. He decreed, under severe penalties, that all the Jewish congregations of the Byzantine empire, including those also which entertained no desire in this direction, should necessarily employ a translation in the Greek or Latin language of the lessons for each Sabbath. He further forbade the use of the Agadic exposition which it had been customary to employ up till then. Thus Justinian desired to suppress the national conceptions of the Holy Scripture in favour of a translation which had been altered in many places to suit the sense of Christianity.

It was probably Justinian who forbade the use of the confession of faith, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is one," to be recited in the synagogues, because it appeared to be a protest against the Trinity. He

also forbade the prayer, "Holy, holy, holy," because the Jews added an Aramaic sentence, so that this prayer should not be taken as a confirmation of the Trinity, as was explained by the Christians. Lastly, he forbade the portion of the prophet Isaiah being read on Saturday afternoon, so that the Jews might not gather from it comfort in their sorrows of the present or hope for the future.

The service in the synagogue was to be a means of converting the Jews, and the national spirit breathed in the Agadic expositions and the homilies was to be banished by means of a typical interpretation of the Bible in favour of the dogmas of the Christian faith. The despot Justinian by no means proposed, therefore, to accord a certain amount of liberty to the synagogue, but desired, on the contrary, to impose a species of restraint on it. He was also so thoroughly in earnest with this decree, that he commanded his minister, Areobindus, to communicate the edict touching the translation into Greek of the lessons read in the synagogue to all the officers of the provinces, and to enjoin them to watch strictly over its exact performance (February 13th, 553).

This malignant edict was, however, followed by no serious consequences; the need of a translation of the Bible was not sufficiently pressing among the Jews generally to oblige them to make use of one. The party which desired to introduce a translation stood isolated, and where the congregation was united it was not impossible to conduct divine service in the customary manner and to escape the notice of the authorities. The preachers continued none the less to make use of the Agada, and by no means abstained from introducing covert attacks upon anti-Jewish Byzantium into their sermons " 'There are creeping things innumerable' (Psalm civ.) signifies the countless edicts which the Roman

empire (Byzantium) publishes against us; the small and great beasts are the dukes, governors, and captains; whosoever of the Jews associates with them shall one day become a laughing-stock.” “As when an arrow is discharged it is not perceived until it pierces the heart, so is it with the decrees of Esau (Byzantium). His shafts come suddenly, and are not noticed until the word is spoken, whether death or imprisonment is meant. ‘The arrow that flieth by day’ refers to their writings.” In this strain the teachers of the Law preached in Judæa.

The Jews of Palestine had but little cause to be satisfied with Justinian’s rule, which oppressed them doubly with its system of extortion of taxes and religious hypocrisy. Stephanus, the governor of Palæstina Prima, was doubtless no better than the majority of officials in Justinian’s time, and it is probable that he contributed to irritate the spirit of the Jews, by whom he was accordingly hated. The time was past, however, when, the yoke of the stranger becoming unbearable, the Jews could shake it with anger from their necks, and seize their weapons. But the Samaritans were more passionate and foolhardy at this time, for they had been hard pressed since the days of the Emperor Zeno. The repeated revolts which they had attempted, had only resulted in making their chains still heavier, especially since the time, when, under Julian, their king of a day, they had so ruthlessly massacred their hated enemies, the Christians. They were compelled, with even greater rigour than the Jews, to embrace Christianity, and all who refused to submit forfeited the right of disposing of their property. Although Sergius, bishop of Cæsarea, bore witness to the facts that the obstinacy of the Samaritans had decreased, and that they embraced Christianity with ever-increasing sincerity, and although he succeeded in inducing Justinian to mitigate the severity of the harsh laws which had

been pronounced upon them, they, nevertheless, bore the deepest hatred of their tormentors concealed in their hearts.

On the occasion of a chariot-race in Cæsarea, the capital, where the jealousy which the colours harboured against one another never allowed such an event to pass off without a riot, the Samaritans threw off all restraint, and fell upon the Christians. The Jewish youth made common cause with them, and together they massacred their Christian opponents in Cæsarea, and destroyed the churches. Stephanus the governor hastened to the aid of the Christians, but the Samaritans pressed him and his military escort so hard that he was obliged to take refuge in the court-house. Eventually they killed him in his own house, and spread terror throughout the city and the surrounding country (July, 556). The Samaritans probably counted upon the support of one of their fellow-countrymen, Arsenios by name, who was the all-powerful favourite of the empress Theodora, with whose secret commissions he was entrusted. Stephanus' widow hurried to Constantinople in order to acquaint the emperor with this disturbance, and the death of her husband, whereupon Justinian conveyed to Amantius, the governor of the East resident in Antioch, the order to intervene with an armed force.

Amantius was easily able to execute this command, as the movement was not possessed of any serious importance, for the whole of the Samaritans and the Jews of Palestine had not associated themselves with it. For this reason punishments were only inflicted upon the culprits; these penalties were, however, in keeping with the spirit of the times, and consisted of beheading, hanging, loss of the right hand, and confiscation of property.

Justinian's successor, Justinus the younger, appears to have made no alteration in the anti-Jewish laws. Although he renewed the oppressive enact-

ments of his predecessor against the Samaritans, whom he deprived of the right to dispose of their property by testament or by deed of gift, there is no edict of his which was prejudicial to the Jews. Under the two excellent emperors, Tiberius and Mauritius, no mention is made of them. It is not until the accession of Phocas the usurper, who recalled the times of Caligula and Commodus, that an event occurs which proves the extent to which the Jews must have suffered from the arbitrariness of the officials and the arrogance of the clergy before they could have been carried away to such a barbarous deed of violence.

In Antioch, where a hatred had existed between Jews and Christians for centuries, and had been further increased by constant friction, the Jews fell upon their Christian neighbours, perhaps on the occasion of the races in the circus, and retaliated upon them in proportion to the injuries which they had suffered; all who fell into their hands they killed and threw into the fire, as the Christians had done to them a century before. The Patriarch Anastasius, surnamed the Sinaite, an object of special hate, was disgracefully illtreated by them, and his body dragged through the streets before he was finally put to death. When the news of this rebellion reached Phocas, he appointed Bonosus as governor of the East, and Cotys as captain of the troops, and charged them with the chastisement of the rioters. But the Jews of Antioch fought so bravely that the Roman army could obtain no advantage over them. It was only when they were attacked afresh with numerous troops drawn together from the neighbouring country that they were obliged to lay down their arms, and were given up to the revenge of the Roman generals, who killed part of them, mutilated others, and sent the rest into banishment (September and October, 608).

The Jews were afforded an unexpected opportunity of giving vent to their deep resentment by the misdeeds of the Emperor Phocas. The usurpation of the throne by this emperor to the detriment of his predecessor Mauritius had provoked the Persian king, Chosru II., who was the son-in-law of the latter, to attack the Roman possessions in the East. An innumerable and irresistible host of Persians inundated Asia Minor and Syria, in spite of the fact that Heraclius, the newly-elected emperor, had announced to the Persian king, Phocas' well-merited chastisement, and had prayed for peace.

A division of the Persian army under the general Sharbarza descended from the heights of Lebanon in order to wrest Palestine from the Byzantine sceptre. At the news of the weakness of the Christian arms, and of the advance of the Persian troops, there awoke in the breast of the Jews of Palestine a fierce desire for battle. It seemed to them as if the hour had at last struck when they could avenge themselves upon their twofold enemy—Roman and Christian—for the humiliations which they had borne for centuries. The home of the warlike movement which thus animated the Jews was in the city of Tiberias. It proceeded from a certain man—Benjamin by name—who possessed a prodigious fortune which he employed in enlisting and arming Jewish troops. A summons was issued to all the Jews of Palestine, inviting them to assemble and to join themselves to the Persian army. With this summons they complied. The sturdy Jewish inhabitants of Tiberias, of Nazareth, and of the mountain cities of Galilee, flocked to the Persian standard. Furious as this band was they certainly did not spare the Christians and their churches in Tiberias, and probably put an end to the bishopric. With Sharbarza's army they marched on Jerusalem, in order to wrest the holy city from the Christians. The Jews of South Palestine attached themselves to

their countrymen, and with the help of these troops, and supported by a band of Saracens, the Persian captain took Jerusalem by storm (July, 614). Ninety thousand Christians are said to have perished in Jerusalem, but the story which relates that the Jews bought the Christian prisoners from the Persians, and killed them in cold blood, is a pure invention.

In their rage, however, the Jews relentlessly destroyed the Christian sanctuaries. All the churches and monasteries were burnt down, and the Jews undoubtedly had a greater share in this deed than the Persians. Had not Jerusalem—the original possession of the Jews—been torn from them by violence and treachery? Were they not obliged to consider that the holy city was foully desecrated by the adoration of the cross and of the bones of the martyrs as by the idolatries of Antiochus Epiphanes, and Hadrian? The Jews seem to have deluded themselves with the hope that the Persians would resign Jerusalem and a province to them to form the territory of a commonwealth.

In conjunction with the Persians, the Jews swept through Palestine, destroyed the monasteries which abounded in the country, and expelled or killed the monks. A band composed of Jews from Jerusalem, Tiberias, Galilee, Damascus, and even Cyprus, undertook an incursion against Tyre, having been invited by the four thousand Jewish inhabitants of that city, to suddenly fall upon the Christians on Easter-night and to massacre them. The Jewish host is said to have consisted of 20,000 men. The expedition, however, miscarried, as the Christians of Tyre had been informed of the impending danger. They therefore anticipated their enemies, seized the persons of their Jewish fellow-citizens, threw them into prison, and awaited the arrival of the Jewish troops, who found the gates closed and

defended. These latter revenged themselves on the foe by destroying the churches around Tyre. As often, however, as the Christians of Tyre received the information of the destruction of a church, they killed a hundred of their Jewish prisoners and threw their heads over the walls. In this manner 2,000 of the latter are said to have met their death. The besiegers, disheartened by the death of their brethren, withdrew, and were pursued by the Tyrians.

The Palestinian Jews were freed from beholding their enemies during a space of about fourteen years, and the immediate result of these wars filled them with joy. No doubt many a Christian became converted from fear, or in despair of the continuance of Christianity. A great triumph was gained by the Jews in the conversion of a monk, who, of his own free will went over to Judaism. This monk had spent many years in the monastery on Mount Sinai in making expiation and reciting litanies. All at once he was assailed by doubts as to the truth of Christianity. He alleged that he had been led to this change by vivid dreams, which showed him on the one side Christ, the apostles, and the martyrs enveloped in gloomy darkness, while on the other side were Moses, the prophets, and the holy men of Judaism, bathed in light. Weary of this internal struggle, he descended from Mount Sinai, crossed the desert to Palestine, and finally betook himself to Tiberias, where he declared to the community his settled determination to embrace Judaism. He offered himself for circumcision, adopted the name of Abraham, married a Jewess, and became henceforward a zealous advocate of Judaism, and a vehement opponent of his former religion.

Meanwhile the hope which the Jews had placed in the Persian conquerors, had not been fulfilled. The Persians did not deliver up to them the city of

Jerusalem, and did nothing to promote the rise of a free Jewish commonwealth, besides which it is possible that they oppressed the Jews with taxes. There thus arose great discord between the allies, which ended in the Persian general seizing many of the Jews of Palestine and banishing them to Persia. This treatment heightened the discontent of the Jews, and induced them to change their opinions and to lean more towards the Emperor Heraclius. This prince, who afforded an example of a dull coward being transformed over night into a fiery hero, was not disinclined to gain his enemies in Judæa over to his side in order to raise difficulties for his chief opponent. He therefore entered into a formal alliance with the Jews, the conclusion of which was probably conducted by Benjamin of Tiberias. By this treaty he assured them impunity for the injuries which they had inflicted on the Christians, besides promising them other advantages with which we are not further acquainted (about 627).

Heraclius' victory, Chosru's blindness, and the revolt of his son Syroes against him, again brought all those countries which had almost been converted for good into Persian satrapies, under the power of the Grecian emperor. In consequence of the conclusion of peace between Heraclius and Syroes (who dethroned and killed his old father), the Persians quitted Judæa, and once again the country fell under Byzantine rule (628). In the autumn of the same year, the emperor proceeded in triumph to Jerusalem. On his road he touched at Tiberias, where he was hospitably entertained by Benjamin, who also furnished the Byzantine army with the means of subsistence. In the course of conversation, the emperor asked him what had induced him to betray so great an animosity to the Christians, to which Benjamin ingenuously replied that they were the enemies of his religion.

When Heraclius entered the holy city he was vehemently besought by the monks and Modestus, the Patriarch, to exterminate all the Jews in Palestine, in revenge for their behaviour to the Christians, and as a precaution for the future, to prevent them from showing their hostility to the Christians in the event of any fresh invasions occurring. The emperor protested, however, that he had given a solemn promise in writing to the Jews, which he was not able to violate without appearing as a sinner before God, and as a traitor before men. In answer to this the fanatical monks asserted that the assassination of the Jews, far from being a crime, was, on the contrary, an offering which would be acceptable to God. Whatever was sinful in it they would take upon their own shoulders, and they offered to appoint a special fast-week for him. This argument convinced the bigoted emperor, and sufficed to quiet his conscience; he instituted a persecution of the Jews throughout Palestine, and massacred such of them as were unable to conceal themselves in the hiding-places of the mountains or to escape to Egypt.

There still existed Jewish congregations in Egypt at the time, even in Alexandria itself, whence they had been expelled by the fanatic Cyril in the beginning of the fifth century. A certain Jew of Alexandria, Urbib by name, celebrated for his wealth and generosity, during a pestilential famine charitably fed the needy without distinction of religion. The Jews of Alexandria, moved by warm sympathy for their suffering co-religionists, fraternally welcomed the unhappy fugitives from Judæa, the victims of monkish fanaticism. Heraclius seized upon this occasion to renew the edict of Hadrian and Constantine, by which the Jews were forbidden to enter Jerusalem or its precincts (628).

CHAPTER II.

THE JEWS IN EUROPE.

Growth of the Jews in Europe—The Communities in Constantinople and Italy—Theodoric—Isidore of Seville—Pope Gregory I.—The Jews of France—Chilperic and Dagobert—Avitus—The Jews in Spain—Controversies between Jews and Christians.

510—640 C.E.

THE Jews of Europe have no history, in the precise sense of the word, until a concourse of fortunate circumstances enabled them to develop their powers and to perform certain deeds whereby they wrested the pre-eminence from their brethren in the East. Until then there are only tales to relate of the martyrdoms which they suffered at the hands of the victorious Church, which monotonously repeat themselves with but small variation in all countries. "Dispersed and divided throughout the whole world," says a celebrated author of this period, in speaking of them, "the Jews are subject to the Roman yoke, and nevertheless live in accordance with their own laws." The only point of interest is the manner in which the Jews settled in the European states, and lived unmolested and peacefully in friendly intercourse with their neighbours, until Christianity gradually confined them, and finally cut off the very breath of their life. In the Byzantine empire, in Ostrogothic Italy, in Frankish and Burgundian Gaul, in Visigothic Spain, everywhere we are confronted with the same phenomena. The people, even the barons and the princes, are entirely devoid of all intolerance, feel no antipathy against the Jews, and associate with them without prejudice; the higher

clergy, however, discover in the prosperity and comfort of the Jews, an encroachment on Christendom. They desire to entirely verify the curse which the founder of Christianity is said to have pronounced on the Jewish nation, and every anti-Jewish, narrow-minded thought which a father of the Church utters against them must be literally fulfilled by embittering their existence. At the councils and synods, the Jewish question occupies the clerical delegates quite as fully as dogmatic controversies and the prevailing immorality, which latter is continually gaining ground among the clergy and the laity, in spite, or perhaps in consequence of, ecclesiastical severity and increased austerity in observances.

It is remarkable, however, that the Roman bishops, among all others, who exerted themselves more and more as the champions of Christianity, should have originally treated the Jews with the utmost toleration and liberality. The occupants of the Papal chair shielded the Jews, and admonished the clergy and the princes not to procure for Christianity any adherents by means of violence and constraint. This liberality was in truth an inconsistency, for the Church, as it had organised itself in consequence of the Council of Nice, ought to have been exclusive, and therefore hard-hearted and prone to persecution. It ought simply to have said to Jew, Samaritan, and heretic: "Believe as I believe, or die;" the sword ought to have supplied the place of arguments for conviction. But who would not prefer the benevolent inconsistency of Gregory the Holy to the terrible consistency of the bloodthirsty kings Sisebut and Dagobert, who, ecclesiastically speaking, were more Catholic than the Pope? Meanwhile the toleration of even the most liberal of the bishops was not of very great importance. They merely refrained from attempting to proselytise by threats of banishment or death, because they were convinced that in this

manner the Church was only peopled with false Christians, who execrated it in their inmost hearts. But they did not hesitate to restrain and harass the Jews, and to place them next to the serfs in the scale of society. This course appeared absolutely just and pious to almost all the representatives of Christianity during the barbaric centuries. Those nations, however, which were baptised in the Arian creed betrayed less intolerance of the Jews. Thus the more Arianism was driven out of Europe and gave way before the Catholic religion, the more were the Jews harassed by proselytising zeal. Their valiant resistance continually incited fresh attacks. Their heroic constancy in the face of permanent degradation is therefore a noble trait which history ought not to conceal. Nor were the Jews devoid of all knowledge in these illiterate times. They were at least better acquainted with the records of their religion than the inferior clergy were with theirs, for the latter were not even capable of reading their missal.

The survey of the settlement of the Jews in Europe begins, as we leave Asia, with the Byzantine empire. They already lived in its cities before Christianity acquired the empire of the world. In Constantinople the Jewish community inhabited a separate quarter, called the brass-market, where there was also a large synagogue. They were, however, expelled thence by an emperor, either Theodosius II. or Justinus II., and the synagogue was converted into the "Church of the Mother of God."

The holy vessels of the ruined Temple, after having been transported from place to place, had at last been deposited at Carthage, where they had remained for nearly a century. It was with pain that the Jews of the Byzantine capital witnessed their removal to Constantinople by Belisarius, the conqueror of the empire of the Vandals. The

Jewish trophies were set up in triumph by the side of Gelimer, the Prince of the Vandals and grandson of Genseric, and the treasures of that unfortunate monarch. A certain Jew, filled with profound grief at seeing the living memorials of Judæa's former greatness in the hands of its enemies, remarked to a courtier that it was not advisable to deposit them in the imperial palace, for they might bring misfortune in their train. They had wrought mischief to Rome, which had been pillaged by Genseric, and they had brought down adversity upon Gelimer, his successor, and his capital. It would therefore be better to remove these holy remains to Jerusalem, where they had been manufactured by King Solomon. No sooner had the Emperor Justinian been informed of this observation than his superstitious mind began to be fearful of the consequences, and he accordingly removed the Temple vessels in haste to Jerusalem, where they were deposited in a church.

In Greece, Macedonia, and Illyria the Jews had already been settled a long time, and although the Christian emperors persecuted them and laid them under considerable restraint, they were nevertheless still permitted to retain the independent government of their own community and their own jurisdiction in civil suits. Every congregation possessed a Jewish overseer (ephoros), who had the control of the market prices, weights, and measures. In Italy the Jews are known to have been domiciled as early as the time of the Republic, and to have been in enjoyment of full political rights until these were curtailed by the Christian emperors. They probably looked with excusable pleasure on the fall of Rome, and exulted to see the ruling city of the universe become the prey of the barbarians and the sport of the whole world, and felt that the lamentation over Jerusalem could be literally applied to Rome as well: "she that was great among the

nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary?" After the Gepidæ and the Heruli, by whom Rome had only been transitorily enslaved, came the Goths, who threw the name of Rome into oblivion by founding the Ostrogothic empire under Theodoric (Dioterich) the Amalian.

The Jews had also to bear their fair part in the calamities which the savage swarms of barbarian tribes brought upon the Roman world. With the adoption of Christianity the Germanic and Slavonic hordes also learnt intolerance from the Romans, their teachers, and in their rude minds it assumed even more hateful forms. The Jewish preachers of this time had new foes of whom to complain. "See, O Lord, how many are mine enemies! If Esau (Rome) hateth Jacob," thus the Agadists expressed themselves, "he hath at least some specious ground, for he was robbed of his birthright; but what hath Israel done to the barbarians and the Goths?" But of what could the barbarians rob the Jews? They had long since forfeited their political independence, and their spiritual fortune was secure enough against destruction. Rome, however, was robbed by the barbarians of its crown, and clothed with the mantle of the slave.

Rome did not even remain the political centre of Italy, Ravenna, in alternation with Verona, being the residence of the Ostrogothic emperors. In these cities, as also in Rome, Milan, and Genoa, Jewish communities already existed at this period. The Jews were also well represented in Lower Italy, especially in the beautiful town of Naples, in Palermo, Messina, and Agrigentum, on the island of Sicily, and in Sardinia. In Palermo lived Jewish families of ancient nobility, who bore the name of Nasas (Nassi). The legal authorities which governed the Italian Jews were the decrees of Theo-

dosius, which permitted them, it is true, to retain the jurisdiction over themselves and the management of the internal business of their communities, but forbade the building of new synagogues, excluded them from judicial offices and military ranks and prohibited them from owning Christian slaves. The last point gave frequent occasion to friction between the clergy and the Jews. The repeated invasions of the barbarian tribes and the numerous wars had increased the number of prisoners, and the Jews carried on a brisk trade in slaves, although they were not the only slave merchants. The depopulated cities and the desolate fields rendered the slave-market a necessity, in order that labourers might be obtained for agriculture and the business of daily life. The Jewish slave-owners made a practice of converting their slaves to Judaism, partly because there was a Talmudical ordinance which directed that they should either be circumcised, or, if they resisted, sold again, and partly in order not to be hindered in the exercise of religious duties by the presence of foreign element in the house. The slaves themselves preferred to remain with their Jewish masters, who, with few exceptions, treated them humanely, regarded them as members of the family, and shared joy and sorrow with them.

Meanwhile, although the restrictions of the Theodosian code possessed the force of law, it may be questioned whether they were really enforced. The bishops of the apostolic see, who had learnt political shrewdness from the Roman statesmen, were too prudent to be fanatic. The Pope Gelasius possessed a friend in the person of a Jew of Telesina, who bore the title of "the most illustrious" (*clarissimus*), at whose request he recommended Antonius, one of the latter's relations, to the bishop Secundinus with great warmth. A charge having been brought against a Jew named Basilius of selling Christian slaves from Gaul, he excused himself with the plea

that he only sold heathen slaves, and that it was impossible to prevent a few Christians from being included among a number of other slaves; this excuse was accepted by Pope Gelasius.

When Italy became Ostrogothic under Theodoric, the position of the Jews in that country was peculiar. Outbreaks of a spirit of hostility to them were not infrequent during this reign, but at the bottom they were not directed against the Jews, but were meant to be a demonstration against this hated Arian monarch. Theodoric, although an Arian, was by no means favourably disposed towards the Jews, whose conversion he desired. He incidentally wrote as follows to the community of Milan, through the medium of his counsellor and minister Cassiodorus: "Why dost thou seek temporal peace, O Judah, when in thine obduracy thou art unable to find eternal peace." The Jews of Genoa having requested permission to put their synagogue in better repair, Theodoric sent them the following reply: "Why do ye desire that which ye should avoid? We accord you indeed the permission ye request; but we blame the wish, which is tainted with error. We cannot command religion, however, nor compel anyone to believe contrary to his conscience." He neither permitted the Jews to erect new synagogues, nor to decorate old ones, but simply allowed them to repair such as were falling into decay.

The Ostrogothic ruler set his honour, however, in preserving internal peace and in upholding the laws, and he was accordingly just to the Jews whenever any undeserved injury was inflicted upon them. The Catholics entertained a secret hate of the Arians, and saw with the deepest resentment the presence of Arianism on the throne, while the Catholic Church was merely magnanimously tolerated: they seized upon every opportunity of thwarting Theodoric, when it could be done with impunity.

On one occasion, when a few slaves rose against their Jewish masters in Rome, the mob collected together, burnt the synagogue, illtreated the Jews, and pillaged their property, in order to laugh Theodoric's edicts to scorn. Theodoric, having been informed of this, bitterly reproached the Roman Senate, which was now but the shadow of its former self, for permitting such misconduct, and charged it, with great severity, to discover the culprits and to oblige them to make compensation for the damage they had done. As the authors of the tumult could not, or were not intended to be discovered, Theodoric condemned the Roman commune to make compensation. By this severity he roused the whole of the Catholic Church against himself.

The Italian Jews of this period are shown in a very favourable light by the fact that, in spite of the general deterioration and demoralization of the political and clerical literature, no other crimes were imputed to them except obduracy and unbelief: Judaism must therefore have shielded them from the prevailing wickedness. Cassiodorus, who became a monk after resigning all his dignities, composed among other works a homiletic exposition of the Psalms, in which he makes frequent reference to the Jews, apostrophizing and endeavouring to convert them. It is characteristic of this period that Cassiodorus,—who, after Boethius, was the only notability of the sixth century possessing a certain philosophic culture—designated the Jews by the most opprobrious names. It would be easy to compile a dictionary of abusive words from his writings; he called them “scorpions and lions,” “wild asses,” “dogs and unicorns.”

In spite of the antipathy entertained against them by the leaders of opinion, the Jews of Italy were happy in comparison with their brethren of the Byzantine empire. Theodoric's successors, his beautiful and accomplished daughter Amalasuntha,

and her husband and murderer Theodatus, a philosophical weakling, did not depart from the principles of their predecessors. The Jews held by King Theodatus with tenacious fidelity, even when he had given himself up. The Jews of Naples set their lives at stake rather than come under Justinian's scourge. Belisarius, the conqueror of the Vandal empire, the laurel-crowned hero, trembled at Justinian's wrath, and allowed himself to be used as the blind tool of the latter's tyranny; he had already subjugated the whole of Sicily and the southern extremity of the Italian peninsula, and now with rapid step was approaching Naples, the largest and most beautiful city of Lower Italy. On his summons to the inhabitants to surrender, the Neapolitans divided into two factions. But even the war party were not disposed to sacrifice themselves for the Ostrogoths, who were hated in Italy. The Jews alone, and two lawyers, Pastor and Asclepiadotus, who had been raised to fame through the influence of the Ostrogothic kings, were decidedly opposed to delivering up the city to the Byzantine general. The Jews, who were as wealthy as they were patriotic, offered to devote their lives, and to apply their fortunes, to the defence of the city. In order to allay the fear of scarcity of provisions they promised to supply Naples with all necessaries during the siege. The Jews, unaided, defended that part of the city which was nearest the sea, and fought with such bravery, that the enemy did not venture to direct their attacks towards that quarter. A contemporary historian (Procopius) has raised a glorious monument to the heroic bravery of the Jews of Naples.

Having one night penetrated into the city by means of treachery the enemy almost made themselves masters of it (536), but the Jews still continued the struggle with the courage of lions. It was only at break of day, when the enemy over-

whelmed them with numbers, and many of their own side had been killed, that the Jews quitted their posts. It is not related how the surviving Jewish combatants fared—certainly not better than their confederates Asclepiadotus and Pastor, who fell victims to the fury of the people. What the Italian Jews had with horror anticipated, occurred; they came under the rule of the Emperor Justinian, whose anti-Jewish ideas assign him a place by the side of Hadrian, Constantine, and Firuz. Italy, the ruler of the world, sank to the rank of a province (Exarchate) of the Byzantine empire, and the Jews of Italy trembled before the exarch of Ravenna.

This situation, however, did not continue long. Justinian's successors were obliged to abandon a great part of Italy for ever to the powerful and uncouth Lombards (589), who, half heathen, half Arian, troubled themselves but little with the Jews. There are, at least, no exceptional laws for the Jews to be met with in the Longobardic Code. Even when the Lombards embraced the Catholic faith the position of the Jews in Italy remained supportable. The heads of the Catholic Church, the Popes, were free from savage intolerance. Gregory I. (590-604), surnamed the great and holy, who laid the foundation of the power of Catholicism, gave utterance to the principle, that the Jews should only be converted by means of persuasion and gentleness, not by violence. He conscientiously maintained the rights of citizenship of the Jews, which had been recognised as belonging to them as Romans by various emperors. In the territory which was subject to the Papal sway in Rome, Lower Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, he steadfastly persisted in this course in the face of the fanatical bishops, who regarded the oppression of the Jews as a pious work. His pastoral letters are full of earnest exhortations, such as the following: "We forbid you to molest the Jews or to restrict them in opposition to the established

laws ; we further permit them to live as Romans and to dispose of their property without prejudice ; we only prohibit them from owning Christian slaves.”

But greatly as Gregory abhorred the forcible conversion of the Jews, he vigorously exerted himself to entice them within the pale of the Church by some other means. He did not even hesitate to speculate upon their self-interest, and remitted a portion of their land-tax to such of the Jewish farmers and peasants as embraced Christianity. He did not, indeed, conceal from himself the fact that the converts who were obtained in this manner were only Christians in appearance ; he counted, however, upon their descendants : “ If we do not gain them over,” he wrote, “ we at least gain their children.” Having heard that a Jew named Nasas had erected an altar to Elijah (probably a synagogue known by this designation) in the island of Sicily, and that Christians met there to celebrate divine service, Gregory commanded the prefect Libertinus to raze the building, and to inflict corporal punishment on Nasas for his offence. Gregory vigorously persecuted such of the Jews as purchased or possessed Christian slaves. In the Frankish empire, where fanaticism had not yet made its way, the Jews were not forbidden to carry on the slave trade. Gregory was indignant at this, and wrote to King Theodoric (Deterich) of Burgundy, Theodebert, king of Austrasia, and also to Queen Brunhilde declaring his astonishment at their permitting the Jews to possess Christian slaves. He exhorted them with great warmth to remove this evil, and to free the true believers from the power of their enemy. Reccared, the king of the Visigoths, who submitted to the Papal see, was flattered by Gregory beyond all measure for promulgating an edict of intolerance.

In the Byzantine empire and in Italy, Christianity

had from the very first offered more or less opposition to Judaism, while in the west of Europe, in France and Spain, where the Church was first obliged to make its way laboriously, the situation of the Jews assumed a different and much more favourable aspect. These countries had been brought out of their usual grooves by the invasions of the barbarians. Roman institutions, both political and ecclesiastical, were nearly effaced, and the empires which had recently been established there by heathen or superficially converted nations, developed themselves without regard for the laws of the Church. It was a long while before Catholicism gained a firm footing in the west of Europe, and the Jews who had settled there enjoyed undisturbed peace until the victorious Church gained the upper hand.

The immigration of the Jews into these important and wealthy provinces took place most probably as early as the time of the Republic or of Cæsar. The Jewish merchants whose business pursuits had brought them from Alexandria or Asia Minor, to Rome and Italy, the Jewish warriors whom the emperors Vespasian and Titus, the conquerors of Judæa, had dispersed as prisoners throughout the Roman provinces, found their way voluntarily or involuntarily as far as Gaul and Iberia. The presence of the Jews in the west of Europe is, however, not certain until the second century.

The Gaulish Jews, whose first settlement was in the district of Arles, enjoyed the full rights of Roman citizenship, whether they arrived in Gaul as merchants or fugitives, with the pedlar's pack or in the garb of slaves; they were likewise treated as Romans by the Frankish and Burgundian conquerors. The most ancient legislation of the Franks and Burgundians did not consider the Jews as a distinct race, subject to peculiar laws. In the Frankish kingdom founded by Clovis, the Jews dwelt in Auvergne (Arverna), in Carcassonne, Arles, Orleans, and as

far north as Paris and Belgium. Numbers of them resided in the old Greek port of Marseilles, and in Beziers (Biterræ), and so many dwelt in the province of Narbonne that a mountain near the city of that name was called after them (*Mons Judaicus*). The territory of Narbonne belonged for a long time to Visigothic Spain, and for this reason the Jewish history of this district reflects all the vicissitudes of the Jews on the further side of the Pyrenees.

The Jews of the Frankish and Burgundian kingdoms were allowed to carry on agriculture, trade, and commerce without restraint; they navigated the seas and rivers in their own ships. They also practised medicine, and the advice of the Jewish physicians was even sought by the clergy who did not like to rely entirely on the miraculous healing powers of the saints and relics which were usually depended on in cases of illness. They were also acquainted with the art of war, and took an active part in the battles between Clovis and Theodoric's generals before Arles (508).

Besides their biblical names, the Jews of Gaul also bore the appellations which were common in the country, such as Armentarius, Gozolus, Priscus, or Siderius. They lived on the best of terms with the population of the country, and inter-marriages even occurred between Jews and Christians. Even the Christian clergy did not scruple to eat at Jewish tables, and on their side often entertained the Jews.

The higher ecclesiastics were offended, however, at the Jews refusing to partake of certain dishes provided at the Christian banquets which the precepts of their religion forbade them to enjoy. For this reason the council of Vannes (465) prohibited the clergy from taking part in Jewish banquets, "because they considered it undignified that Christians should eat the viands of the Jews, whereas the latter refused to partake of Christian dishes, thus

making it appear as though the clergy were inferior to the Jews.” But this decision of the council was of no avail; canonical severity was powerless to check this friendly intercourse. It therefore became necessary to re-enact this ecclesiastical prohibition several times. Thus, in spite of their separation from Judæa and Babylonia, the centres of Judaism, the Jews of Gaul lived in strict accordance with the precepts of their religion. Wherever they settled they built their synagogues and constituted their communities in exact agreement with the directions of the Talmud.

The friendly relations existing between the Jews and the inhabitants of Gaul underwent no change even when the latter came, by reason of Clovis’ conversion, under the rule of the Catholic Church. Although a blood-thirsty butcher, Clovis was no fanatic. The clergy were under an obligation to him because he had abandoned heathenism for Christianity, and he was therefore not expected to accord them any influence or ascendancy. As he left an hereditary kingdom to his successors, they were not placed in painful situations and dilemmas, as were the elective kings of the Visigoths, and were not obliged to make either concessions or sacrifices to the Church. Among the Franks, therefore, heathen customs remained long in vogue, and the Jews were also permitted to live according to their religion without molestation. It is true that many ecclesiastical fanatics exerted themselves to convert the Jews by every means in their power, even using illtreatment, and that many severe resolutions were passed at the councils. But these persecutions remained isolated, even when they were approved or aided by one or another of the energetic kings. Burgundy, however, had always been more hostile to the Jews than the rest of France, ever since King Sigismund had embraced the Catholic faith (516), and had thought

himself bound to elevate the oppression of the Arians and Jews into the policy of the State. It was this king who first raised the barrier between Jews and Christians. He confirmed the decision of the council of Epaone, held under the presidency of the blood-thirsty bishop Avitus, forbidding even laymen to take part in Jewish banquets (517).

A spirit of hostility to the Jews gradually spread from Burgundy over the Frankish countries. Already at the third and fourth councils at Orleans (538 and 545), which sat at short intervals, severe enactments were passed against them. Not only were the Christians commanded not to take part in Jewish banquets, and the Jews forbidden to make proselytes, but the latter were even prohibited from appearing in the streets and public squares during Easter, because "their appearance was an insult to Christianity." Childebert I. of Paris, embodied this last point in his constitution (554), and thus exalted the intolerance of the clergy into a law of the State. This feeling of hostility, however, was not yet prevalent among Childebert's contemporaries. The Frankish empire was ruled over by several monarchs, who, although related, hated one another mortally; this division had the effect of confining the manifestations of their intolerance to individual provinces. Even ecclesiastical dignitaries of high rank still continued to maintain friendly intercourse with the Jews, without fearing any danger to the Church. But fanaticism is contagious by nature; when it has once gained a firm footing in a country it obtains an ascendancy over all minds, and overcomes all scruples. In the Frankish empire the hatred of the Jews proceeded from a man, who may be regarded as its very incarnation. This was Avitus, Bishop of Arverna, whose see was at Clermont; what Cyril had been to the Jews of Alexandria, Avitus was to the Jews of Gaul.

The Jewish population of his bishopric was a thorn in his side, and he accordingly incited the members of his flock against them. Again and again he summoned the Jews of Clermont to offer themselves for conversion, but his sermons falling upon deaf ears, he roused the mob to attack the synagogues and raze them to the ground. But even this did not content the fanatic, and he accordingly offered the Jews the choice of presenting themselves for baptism or of quitting the city. Only one Jew received baptism, on which account he became an object of abhorrence to the whole community. As he was going through the streets in his white baptismal robe during the Pentecost, he was sprinkled with rancid oil by a Jew. This seemed a challenge to the fanatic mob, and they accordingly attacked the Jews. The latter retreated to their houses, where they were surprised and many of them killed. The sight of blood caused the faint hearts to waver, and five hundred of the Jews supplicated Bishop Avitus to accord them the favour of baptism, and implored him to put an end to the massacre at once. Such of them as remained true to their religion fled, however, to Marseilles (576). The Christian population celebrated the day of the baptism of the five hundred with wild rejoicing, as though the cross could pride itself on a victory which had been won by the sword. The news of the occurrence in Clermont caused great joy among the fanatics. Bishop Gregory of Tours invited the pious poet Venantius Fortunatus to celebrate in song the achievement of Avitus. But the Latin verses of this poet, who had emigrated to France from Italy, instead of glorifying Avitus, have raised a monument of shame to his memory. They indicate quite clearly that the Jews of Clermont suffered innocently, and were only converted to Christianity out of sheer desperation. Thus the effects of the ever-increasing fanaticism made themselves felt in

many parts of France. The Council of Macon (581) adopted several resolutions which aimed at assigning an inferior position in society to the Jews. They were neither to officiate as judges nor to be allowed to become tax farmers, "lest the Christian population appear to be subjected to them." The Jews were further obliged to pay profound reverence to the Christian priests, and were only to seat themselves in their presence by express permission. All who transgressed this law were to be severely punished. The edict forbidding the Jews to appear in public during Easter was re-enacted by this council. Even King Chilperic, although he bore no particular goodwill to the Catholic clergy, followed in the road of proselytism marked out by Avitus. He also compelled the Jews of his empire to receive baptism, and himself removed the Jewish neophytes from the baptismal font. But he was content with the mere appearance of conversion, and offered no opposition to the Jews, although they continued to celebrate the Sabbath and to observe the laws of Judaism.

The later of the Merovingian kings became more and more bigoted, and their hatred of the Jews consequently increased. Clotaire II., on whom had devolved the rule of the entire Frankish empire (613), was a matricide, but was nevertheless held up as a model of religious piety. He sanctioned the decisions of the Council of Paris, which forbade the Jews to hold magisterial power or to take military service (615). His son Dagobert must be counted among the most anti-Jewish monarchs in the whole history of the world. Many thousands of Jewish fugitives, who had fled to the Frankish empire, to escape from the fanaticism of Sisebut, king of the Visigoths, roused the jealousy of this sensual monarch, who was ashamed of being inferior to his Visigothic contemporary, and of manifesting less religious zeal. He therefore issued a decree, in

which he declared that the entire Jewish population of the Frankish empire had either to embrace Christianity before a certain day, or they would be treated as enemies and punished with death (about 629).

The more the authority of the Merovingian drones, as they have been called, declined, and the more the power of the politic and cautious stewards, Pepin's descendants, rose, the greater was the exemption from persecution and torture enjoyed by the Jews. The predecessors of Charlemagne seem to have had a presentiment that the Jews were a serviceable class of men, whose activity and intellectual capabilities could not but be advantageous to the State. The slave trade alone remained a standing subject of legislation in the Councils ; but in spite of their zeal they were unable to abolish the traffic in human beings, because they only condemned it from one point of view.

The Jews of Germany are certainly only to be regarded as colonies of the Frankish Jews, and such of them as lived in Austrasia, a province subject to the Merovingian kings, shared the same fate as their brethren in France. According to a chronicle, the most ancient Jews in the Rhine district are said to have been the descendants of the legionaries who took part in the destruction of the Temple. Out of the innumerable horde of Jewish prisoners, the Vangioni had chosen the most beautiful women, had brought them back to their stations on the shores of the Rhine and the Main, and had compelled them to minister to the satisfaction of their desires. The children thus begotten of Jewish and Germanic parents were brought up by their mothers in the Jewish faith, their fathers not troubling themselves about them. It is these children who are said to have been the founders of the first Jewish communities between Worms and Mayence. It is certain that a Jewish congregation existed in the Roman colony of the city of Cologne long before Christianity

had been raised to power by Constantine. The heads of the community, and its most respected members had obtained from the heathen emperors the privilege of exemption from the onerous municipal offices. The first Christian emperor, however, narrowed the limits of this immunity, and only exempted two or three families. The Jews of Cologne also enjoyed the privilege of exercising their own jurisdiction, which they were allowed to retain until the middle ages. A non-Jewish plaintiff, even though he were a priest, was obliged to bring his suit against a Jew before the Jewish judge (bishop of the Jews).

While the history of the Jews in Byzance, Italy, and France, possesses but special interest, that of their brethren in the Pyrenean peninsula rises to the height of universal importance. The Jewish inhabitants of this happy peninsula contributed by their hearty interest to the greatness of the country which they loved as only a fatherland can be loved, and thereby achieved a world-wide reputation. Jewish Spain contributed almost as greatly to the development of Judaism as Judæa and Babylonia, and as was the case in these countries, every spot in this new home has become classic for the Jewish race. Cordova, Grenada, and Toledo, are as familiar to the Jews as Jerusalem and Tiberias, and almost more so than Nahardea and Sora. When Judaism had come to a standstill in the East, and had grown weak with age, it acquired new vigour in Spain, and extended its fruitful influence over a wide sphere. Spain seemed to be destined by providence to become a new centre for the dispersed race, where they might meet in spirit, and to which they could point with pride.

The first settlement of the Jews in beautiful Hesperia is buried in dim obscurity. It is certain that they came there as free men as early as the time of the Roman Republic, in order to take advantage of the productive resources of this country.

The tortured victims of the unhappy insurrections under Vespasian, Titus, and Hadrian were also dispersed to the extreme west, and an exaggerated account relates that 80,000 of them were dragged off to Spain as prisoners. They probably did not remain long in slavery; the sympathy of their free brethren undoubtedly spurred on the latter to ransom them, and thus to fulfil the most important of the duties prescribed by Talmudical Judaism to its adherents. How numerous the Jews had settled in many parts of Spain is proved by the names which they conferred upon these localities. The city of Grenada was called Jews-town in former times, on account of its being entirely inhabited by Jews: the same name was also borne by the ancient Phœnician town of Tarragon (Tarracona), before its conquest by the Arabs. In Cordova there existed a Jewish gateway of ancient date, and near Saragossa there was a fortress which at the time of the Arabs was called Ruta al Jahud. In the neighbourhood of Tortosa a gravestone was found with both a Hebrew name and also a national patronymic. This memorial was inscribed in three languages—Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; the Jews must, therefore, have emigrated to the north of Spain at an early period from a Grecian district. They had also acquired the Latin language, without forgetting that of the Holy Writings.

The Spanish pride of ancestry, which the Jews of this country also inherited, was not content with the fact that the Jewish colony in Spain had possessed the right of citizenship long before the Visigoths and other Germanic tribes had set their tyrannous iron foot in the land, but also desired to assert an even higher antiquity for them. The Spanish Jews pretended that they had already been transported hither after the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonian conqueror, Nebuchadnezzar. Certain Jewish families, the Ibn-Dauds and the Abrabanel,

boasted of being descended from the royal house of David, and maintained that their ancestors had been settled since time immemorial partly in the district of Lucena, and partly in the environs of Toledo and Seville. The numerous Spanish-Jewish family of Nasi also traced back their pedigree to King David, and proved it by means of a genealogical table and seals. The family of the Ibn-Albalias was more modest, and only dated their immigration from the destruction of the Second Temple. A family tradition runs to the effect that the Roman governor of Spain begged the conqueror of Jerusalem to send him some noble families from the capital of Judæa, and that Titus complied with his request. Among those who were thus transported was a man of the name of Baruch, who excelled in the art of weaving curtains for the Temple. This Baruch, who settled in Merida, was the ancestor of the Ibn-Albalias.

Christianity had so early taken root in Spain, that it was possible for a council of bishops, priests, and the subordinate clergy to meet at Illiberis (Elvira, near Granada), some time before Constantine's conversion. The Jews were nevertheless held in high esteem by the Christian population, as they had formerly been by the heathens. The Iberians and Romans who had been converted to Christianity had not yet discovered in the Jews a race repudiated by God, a people whose presence was to be shunned. They associated with their Jewish neighbours in perfect freedom. The newly-converted inhabitants of the country, who often heard their apostle preach of Jews and Judaism, had no conception of the wide gulf dividing Judaism from Christianity, and as often had the produce of their fields blessed by Jewish priests as by their own clergy. Intermarriages between Jews and Christians occurred as frequently in Spain as in Gaul.

The higher Catholic clergy, however, could not suffer this friendly intercourse between Jews and

Christians to continue ; they perceived in it a danger for the newly-established church. To the representatives of the Church in Spain is due the honour—if honour it be—of first having raised a barrier between Jew and Christian. The Council of Illiberis (about 320), at whose head was Osius, Bishop of Cordova, forbade the Christians, under pain of excommunication from the pale of the Church, to hold friendly intercourse with the Jews, to contract marriages with them, or to allow them to bless the produce of their fields. The seed of malignant hatred of the Jews, which was thus first sown by the Synod of Illiberis, did not however produce its poisonous fruit until much later. When the migrating Germanic hordes of the Suevi, Vandals and Visigoths first laid waste this beautiful country and then chose it for their home, the Catholics of the land were obliged to bear the yoke of political and religious dependence, for the Visigoths, who had taken lasting possession of the peninsula, happened to have been converted to the Arian faith. On the whole the Visigothic Arians were tolerably indifferent to the controversy of the two creeds as to whether the Son of God was the same as, or similar to, the Father, and whether bishop Arius ought to be regarded as orthodox or heretical. But they thoroughly hated the Catholic inhabitants of the country, because in every Catholic they saw a Roman, and consequently an enemy. The Jews, on the other hand, were unmolested under the Arian kings, and besides enjoying civil and political equality, were admitted to the public offices. Their skill and knowledge, which gave them the advantage over the uncivilised Visigoths, specially fitted them for these posts. The favourable condition of the Jews in Spain continued for more than a century, beginning with the time when this country first became a province of the Toletanic-Visigothic empire, and extending over the later

period when, under Theudes (531), it became the centre of the same. The Jews who dwelt in the province of Narbonne, and in that district of Africa which formed part of the Visigothic empire, also enjoyed the same civil and political equality; certain of them rendered material service to the Visigothic kings. Such of the Jews as lived at the foot of the Pyrenees, defended the passes leading from Gaul into Spain against the invasions of the Franks and the Burgundians, who had cast a longing eye on the country. They were regarded as the most trusty guardians of the frontier, and their martial courage earned them special distinction. The Visigothic Jews must have remained in communication, either through Italy or through Africa, with Judæa or Babylonia, from which countries they probably received their religious teachers. They adhered strictly to the precepts of the Talmud, abstained from non-Jewish wine, and admitted their heathen and Christian slaves into the covenant of Judaism, as ordained by the Talmud. While their brethren on the other side of the Pyrenees were greatly oppressed, and forcibly converted to Christianity or compelled to emigrate, they enjoyed complete liberty of religion, and were further granted the privilege, which was denied the Jews in all the other countries of Europe, of initiating their slaves into their religion.

But as soon as the Catholic church obtained the supremacy in Spain, and Arianism began to be persecuted, an unfavourable crisis set in for the Jews of this country. King Reccared, who had abjured the Arian creed at the Council of Toledo, was the first to unite with the Synod in imposing restrictions on the Jews. They were prohibited from contracting marriages with the Christians, from acquiring Christian slaves, and from holding public offices; such of their children as were born of intermarriages were to be forcibly baptised (589).

They were thus relegated to a position of degradation, which they felt all the more painfully as they were animated by a sense of honour, and until now had lived upon equal terms with their fellow citizens, having, in fact, been privileged over the Catholics. Most oppressive of all was the restraint touching the possession of slaves. Henceforward the Jews were neither to purchase Christian slaves nor to accept them as presents, and in cases of transgression, if they had admitted the slaves into Judaism, they were to lose all rights in them; as for those who had circumcised a Christian slave, their entire fortune was forfeit to the State. All well-to-do people in the country possessed slaves and serfs, who cultivated their land and provided for the wants of the house; the Jews alone were to be deprived of this advantage. It is conceivable that the wealthy Jews who owned slaves exerted themselves to obtain the repeal of Reccared's law, and to this end they proffered a considerable sum of money to the king. Reccared, however, refused their offer, and for this deed was commended beyond all measure by Pope Gregory, whose heart's desire was fulfilled by this law (599). Gregory compared the Visigothic monarch to David, king of Israel, "who refused to accept the water which his warriors had brought him at the risk of their lives, and poured it out before the Lord." In the same manner, he contended, Reccared had sacrificed to God the gold which had been offered to him. At the same time Reccared confirmed a decision of the Council of Narbonne, forbidding the Jews to sing Psalms at their funeral services,—a custom which they had probably adopted from the church.

Although Reccared desired to enforce these restrictive laws against the Jews, it was nevertheless not very difficult for the latter to evade them. The peculiar constitution of Visigothic Spain afforded them the means of escaping their

pressure. According to this constitution the king was not an all-powerful ruler, for the Visigothic nobles, who possessed the right of electing him, were absolutely independent in their own provinces. Neither they nor the people at large shared the fanaticism of the church against the Jews. They accorded them, as in the past, the right of purchasing slaves, and probably also bestowed offices upon them. In twenty years Reccared's laws against the Jews had fallen into complete disuse. His successors paid but little attention to the matter, and were altogether not unfavourably disposed towards the Jews.

At this period, however, a king of the Visigoths was elected, who, though not uncivilized, and even liberal on other points, was nevertheless a scourge for the Jews of his dominions, and, in consequence of this disposition, conjured up a grievous destiny for his empire. Sisebut, a contemporary of the Emperor Heraclius, was, like the latter, a fanatical persecutor of the Jews. But while some excuse may be found for Heraclius's conduct in the revolt of the Jews of Palestine, and in the fact that he was compelled to adopt this course by the blind fury of the monks, Sisebut acted thus without any shadow of provocation, of his own free will, and almost contrary to the wish of the Catholic clergy. At the very commencement of his reign (612) the Jews engaged his attention. His conscience was troubled with the fact, that in spite of Reccared's laws, Christian slaves still served Jewish masters, and were initiated into Judaism, to which faith they willingly adhered. He therefore renewed these laws, and commanded the ecclesiastics and judges, as well as the entire population of the country, to see that for the future no Christians stood in servile relations to the Jews. But he went further in this direction than Reccared; the Jews were not only prohibited from acquiring

any slaves, but were forbidden to retain those which they already possessed. Only those Jews who embraced Christianity were permitted to own slaves, and they alone were allowed to advance a claim to the slaves left by their Jewish relatives. Sisebut solemnly exhorted his successors to maintain this law. "May the king who dares to abolish this law"—thus ran the formula of Sisebut's oath—"incur the deepest disgrace in this world, and the eternal torments of hell in the flames of purgatory in the world to come." In spite of this severity and of Sisebut's earnest exhortations, this law appears to have been as little enforced at that period as under Reccared. The independent nobles of the country extended their protection to the Jews, either for their own interest or out of defiance to the king. Even many of the priests and bishops seem to have supported the Jews, and to have concerned themselves but little with the king's command. Sisebut therefore enacted a still severer rule. Within a certain interval all the Jews of the land were either to receive baptism or to quit the territory of the Visigothic empire. This order was strictly executed. The weak, who clung to their property, or loved the land which their fathers had inhabited time out of mind, allowed themselves to be baptized. The stronger-minded, on the other hand, whose conscience could approve of no internal restraint, emigrated to France or to the neighbouring continent of Africa (612—613). The clergy, however, were by no means satisfied with this compulsory conversion, and one of their principal representatives reproached the king "that he had, indeed, exhibited zeal for the faith, but not conscientious zeal." With this fanatical persecution Sisebut paved the way to the dissolution of the Visigothic empire.

Sisebut's rigorous laws against the Jews lasted no longer than his reign. They were repealed by

his successor, Swintila, a just and liberal monarch, whom the oppressed named the “father of his country.” The exiled Jews returned to their native land, and the proselytes reverted to Judaism (621—631). In spite of their baptism, the Jewish converts had not abandoned their religion. The act of baptism was deemed sufficient at this period, and no one inquired whether the converts still retained their former customs and usages. The noble King Swintila was, however, dethroned by a conspiracy of nobles and the clergy, and a docile tool, Sisenand by name, raised to his place. Under this monarch the clergy again acquired the ascendancy. Once again, at the Council of Toledo (633), the Jews became the object of synodal attention. At the head of this council stood Isidore, archbishop of Hispalis (Seville), a well-informed and equitable prelate, but infected with the prejudices of his time. The synod proclaimed the principle that the Jews ought not to be driven into Christianity by violence and threats of punishment, but nevertheless Recared’s laws against them were re-enacted. The full severity of the ecclesiastical legislation was, however, directed against the Jews who had been forcibly converted under Sisebut, and had reverted to their religion. Although the clergy themselves had blamed this step, they nevertheless considered it a duty to retain as Christians the Jews who had once received the holy sacrament, “in order that the faith might not be dishonoured.” Religion was only regarded at this period as an external confession. The synods which sat under Sisenand decided, therefore, that the Jews who had once been baptized should be forcibly restrained from the observance of their religion, and withdrawn from the society of their co-religionists, and that the children of both sexes should be torn from their parents and thrust into monasteries. Those of them who should be discovered observing the Sabbath and the Jewish

festivals, contracting marriages according to the Jewish rites, practising circumcision, or abstaining from certain foods, agreeably to the precepts of Judaism, were to expiate their offence by forfeiting their freedom. They were to be reduced to slavery, and presented to orthodox Christians as determined by the king. According to this canonical legislation, the forcibly converted Jews and their descendants were not to be admitted as witnesses, because "those who had been untrue to God could not be sincere to man;" thus ran the inference reached by want of insight. In comparison with this severity, the treatment of the Jews who had remained steadfast to their faith appears quite merciful.

Even these, however, the clergy exerted themselves to alienate from Judaism. Isidore of Seville wrote two books against the Jews, wherein he attempted to prove the doctrines of Christianity from the Old Testament, naturally in that tasteless, senseless manner which it had been customary to employ ever since the commencement of polemics against Judaism by the Fathers. The Spanish Jews were thus induced to take up the controversy, and to refute this specious proof, in order to confirm themselves in their ancestral faith. To these treatises, therefore, the learned men among them replied with counter treatises, written probably in Latin. Their superior knowledge of the Biblical records made their victory easy. In answer to the principal rejoinder, that the sceptre had departed from Judah, and that the Christians, who possessed kings, thus formed the true people of Israel, the Jews pointed to a Jewish kingdom in the extreme east, which they asserted was ruled over by a descendant of David. They alluded to the Jewish-Himyarite empire in South Arabia, which, however, was governed by a dynasty which had been converted to Judaism.

These resolutions of the fourth Council of Toledo and Sisenand's persecution of the Jewish converts, do not appear to have been carried out with all the proposed severity. The Visigothic-Spanish nobles took the Jews more and more under their patronage, and against them the royal authority was powerless. At this period, however, a king ascended the Visigothic throne who resembled Sisebut. Chintila assembled a general council, and not only did he obtain from them a confirmation of all anti-Jewish clauses contained in the existing laws, but enacted that no one should be allowed to remain in the Visigothic empire who did not embrace the Catholic religion. The ecclesiastical assembly adopted these propositions with joy, and exulted over the fact that "by the piety of a king the inflexible infidelity of the Jews would at last be destroyed." They also appended the canonical law, that for the future every king before his accession should be compelled to take a solemn oath not to allow the converted Jews to violate the Catholic faith, nor to favour their unbelief, but to strictly enforce the ecclesiastical decisions against them (638).

For a second time the Jews were obliged to emigrate, and the converts, who still clung to Judaism in their secret hearts, were compelled to sign a confession to the effect that they would observe and obey the Catholic religion without reserve. But the confession thus signed by men wounded to their very soul, was not, and could not be, sincere. They hoped steadfastly for better times, when they might be able to throw off the mask, and the elective constitution of the Visigothic empire placed the epoch in the near future. The present situation only lasted four years, during Chintila's reign (638—642).

CHAPTER III.

THE JEWS OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA.

Happy condition of the Jews in Arabia—Traditions as to their original settlements—Yathrib and Chaibar—The Jewish-Arabic tribes—The Benu-Nadhir, the Benu-Kuraiza, and Benu-Bachdal—The Benu-Kainukaa—The Jews of Yemen—Their power and influence—Conversion of Arabian tribes to Judaism—Abu-Kariba the first Jewish-Himyarite King—Zorah Dhu-Nowas—Samuel Ibn-Adija—Mahomet—His indebtedness to Judaism—Mahomet's early friendliness to the Jews and subsequent breach with them—His attacks on the Jewish tribes—The War of the Ditch—The position of the Jews under the Caliphs.

500—662 C.E.

WEARIED with contemplating the miserable plight of the Jews in their primitive home and the countries of Europe, and fatigued by the continued sight of the same fanatical oppression, the glance of the observer reposes with gladness upon their situation in the Arabian peninsula. Here the sons of Judah were free to raise their heads, and no longer were forced to look about them with fear and humiliation lest the ecclesiastical wrath should be discharged upon them, or the secular arm raised against them. Here they were not repulsed from the paths of honour, nor excluded from the privileges of the State, but they were allowed to openly develop their powers in the midst of a free, simple, and talented people, and to show their manly courage; here they were permitted to struggle for the prizes of glory, and to meet their antagonists with the sword in their practised hand. Instead of bearing the yoke, the Jews were not infrequently the leaders of Arabian tribes. Their intellectual superiority constituted them a power, and they concluded offensive and defensive alliances,

and carried on feuds. Besides the sword and the lance, however, they handled the ploughshare and the lyre, and gradually became the teachers of the Arabian nation. The history of the Jews of Arabia in the century which precedes Mahomet's appearance, and during the period of his activity, forms a glorious page in the annals of the Jews.

The first immigration of Jewish families into the free and healthy peninsula is buried in misty tradition. Sometimes, it is said that the Israelites sent by Joshua to fight the Amalekites settled in the city of Yathrib (afterwards Medina), and in the province of Chaibar. At others, the Israelite warriors, under Saul, who spared the beautiful young son of the Amalekite king, and were expelled from the nation for their disobedience, are related to have returned to the Hejas (north Arabia) and to have settled there. An Israelite colony is also supposed to have been formed in North Arabia during the reign of David. It is possible that under the powerful kings of Judah, seafaring Israelites, who navigated the Red Sea on their road to Ophir—the land of gold—founded factories for the trade with India in Mariba and Sanaa (Usal), the most important commercial towns of South Arabia (Yemen, Himyara, Sabea), and planted Jewish colonies there. The later Arabian Jews, pretended, however, to have heard from their forefathers that many Jewish fugitives escaped to North Arabia on the destruction of the First Temple by Nebuchadnezzar. But there can be no doubt that the persecution of the Jews by the Romans was the means of procuring a Jewish population for the Arabian peninsula. The death-defying zealots who, after the destruction of the Second Temple, fled in part to Egypt and Cyrene in order to continue there the despairing struggle against the thralldom of Rome, also passed in straggling bands to Arabia, where they were not required to sur-

render their spirit of freedom or to abandon their warlike bearing.

From these fugitives sprang three Jewish-Arabic tribes—the Benu-Nadhir, the Benu-Kuraiza, and the Benu-Bachdal, the first two of which were descended from Aaron, and therefore called themselves Cohanim (Al-kahinani). Another Jewish family—the Benu-Kainukaa—were established in North Arabia, and their mode of living was different from that of the Nadhir and Kuraiza. These tribes had their centre in the city of Yathrib, which was situated in a fruitful district, planted with palms and rice, and watered by small streams. As the Jews were often molested by Bedouins, they built castles on the elevated sites of the city and the surrounding country, whereby they guarded their independence. Although originally the sole rulers of this district, they were afterwards obliged to share their power and the possession of the soil with the Arabs, for, about the year 300, two kindred families, the Benu-Aus and the Chazraj (together forming the tribe of Kaila) settled in the same neighbourhood, and sometimes stood in friendly, sometimes in hostile relations with the Jews.

To the north of Yathrib was situated the district of Chaibar, which was entirely inhabited by Jews, who constituted a separate commonwealth. The Jews of Chaibar are supposed to have been descendants of the Rechabites, who, in accordance with the command of their progenitor, Jonadab the son of Rechab, led a nomadic and Nazirite life; after the destruction of the First Temple they are said to have wandered as far as the district of Chaibar, attracted by its abundance of palms and grain. The Jews of Chaibar constructed a line of castles or fortresses, like the castles of the Christian knights; the strongest of them was Kamus, built upon a hill difficult of access. These castles protected them from the predatory incursions of the warlike

Bedouins, and enabled them to offer an asylum to many a persecuted fugitive. Wadil-Kora (the valley of the villages), a fertile plain a day's journey from Chaibar, was also exclusively inhabited by Jews. In Mecca, where stood the sanctuary of the Arabs, there probably lived but few Jews.

They were numerous represented, however, in South Arabia (Yemen), "the land," as it was extolled by its inhabitants, "of which the very dust was gold, which produced the healthiest men, and whose women brought forth without pain." But unlike their brethren in Hejas, the Jews of Arabia Felix lived devoid of racial or political cohesion, and were dispersed among the Arabs. They obtained nevertheless in time so great an influence over the Arab tribes and kings of Yemen (Himyara) that they were able to prevent the propagation of Christianity in this region. The Christian emperors of Byzance had cast their eyes upon these markets for Indian produce. Without actually meditating the subjection of the brave Himyarites (Homerites), they desired to gain their friendship by converting them to Christianity: the cross was to be the means of effecting a commercial connection. It was not until the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century that the Christian envoys succeeded in converting to Christianity an Arab prince and his tribe, whose capital was the commercial town of Najara. Arabia only owned half the island of Yotabe (now Jijbân), in the Red Sea (60 miles to the south of the capital, Aila), upon which a small Jewish free state had existed from time immemorial.

In consequence of their Semitic descent, the Jews of Arabia possessed many points of contact with the primitive inhabitants of the country. Their language was nearly related to Arabic, and their customs, except those that had been created by their religion, were not different from those of the sons

of Arabia. The Jews became, therefore, so thoroughly Arabic that they were only distinguished from the natives of the country by their religious belief. Intermarriage between the two nations promoted the assimilation of their characters. Like the Himyarites, the Jews of South Arabia applied themselves more particularly to the world's trade between India, the Byzantine empire, and Persia. The Jews of Northern Arabia, on the contrary, led the life of the Bedouins; they occupied themselves with agriculture, cattle breeding, transport by caravan, traffic in weapons, and probably also the calling of robbers. The Arabian Jews likewise possessed a patriarchal tribal constitution. Several families were united under one name, and led by a chieftain (*shaïch*), who in times of peace settled controversies and pronounced sentence, and in war commanded all the men who were able to bear arms and concluded alliances with neighbouring tribes. Like the Arabs, the Jews of the peninsula extended their hospitality to every one who entered their tents, and held inviolable faith with their allies; but they also shared the faults of the original inhabitants of the peninsula, avenging the death of one of their number with rigorous inflexibility, and hiding in ambush in order to surprise and annihilate their enemy. It would sometimes happen that a Jewish tribe, having entered into an alliance with an Arabian clan, would find itself opposed to a kindred tribe which had espoused another cause. But even when Jews were at feud with one another, their innate qualities moderated in them the ferocity of the Bedouins, who were accustomed to deal relentlessly with their foe. They ransomed the prisoners of a kindred tribe, with whom they happened to be at war; from the hands of their allies, being unwilling to abandon them as slaves into the power of heathens, "because," said they, "the redemption of such of our co-religion-

ists as are prisoners is a religious duty." Besides being equal to the Arabs in bravery, the Jews also contended with them for the palm in poetry. For in addition to manliness and courage, poetry also belonged to the education of a noble Arabian; it was cultivated by the chieftains and richly rewarded by the Arabian kings. Next to the warrior, the poet was the most honoured man in Arabia, to whom all hearts and tents opened wide. The Jews of Arabia were likewise able to speak the Arabic language, and to adorn their poetry with rhythmic measures.

The knowledge of religion, which the Arabian Jews had brought from their home in their flight from Judæa, and that which was afterwards conveyed to them from the academies, gave them the superiority over the heathen tribes, of which they soon became the masters. While but few Arabs were familiar with the art of writing until far into the seventh century, it was universally understood by the Jews, who made use, however, of the square character, the so-called Assyrian signs. As the few Arabs who succeeded in learning to write likewise generally employed the Hebrew characters, it would appear that they first acquired the art of writing from the Jews. Every Jew in Arabia was probably able to read the Holy Scriptures, for which reason the Arabs called them the "nation of writing" (Ahl' ul kitab).

In the form in which it was transmitted to them, that is to say, with the character impressed upon it by the Tanaim and the Amoraim, Judaism was most holy to the Arabian Jews. They strictly observed the dietary laws, and solemnized the festivals, and the fast of Yom-Kippur, which they called Ashura. They celebrated the Sabbath with such rigour, that in spite of their desire for war, and the opportunity of satisfying it, they would let the sword remain in its scabbard on that day. Although they

had nothing to complain of in this hospitable country, which they were able to regard and love as their fatherland, they yearned nevertheless to return to the holy land of their fathers, and daily awaited the coming of the Messiah. Like all the Jews of the globe, therefore, they turned their face in prayer towards Jerusalem. They were in communication with the Jews of Palestine, and even after the fall of the Patriarchate willingly subordinated themselves to the authorities in Tiberias, whence they received, as also probably from the Babylonian academies, religious instructions and interpretations of the Bible. Yathrib was the seat of Jewish erudition, and possessed teachers of the Law (Achbâr, Chabar) who expounded the Scriptures in an academy (Midras). But the knowledge which the Arabian Jews possessed of the Bible was not considerable. They were only acquainted with it through the glasses of the Agadic exegesis, which had become familiar to them before their journey or had been imported by immigrants. For them the glorious history of the past coalesced so completely with the Agadic additions, that they were no longer able to separate the gold from the dross. Endowed with poetical fancy, the Arabian Jews on their side embellished the biblical history with interesting legends, which were afterwards put in circulation as actual facts.

The Jews of Arabia, enjoying complete liberty, and being subjected to no restraint, were able to defend their religious opinions without fear, and to communicate them with impunity to their heathen neighbours. The Arab mind, susceptible to intellectual promptings, was delighted with the child-like but sublime contents of the Bible, and by degrees certain Jewish conceptions and religious ideas became familiar and current in Arabia. The Arabian Jews made their neighbours acquainted with a calendar, without which the latter were

unable to set themselves right; learned Jews from Yathrib taught the Arabs to insert another month in their lunar year, which was far in arrear of the solar year. The Arabs adopted the nineteen-years cycle from the Jews (about 420), and called the intercalary month *Nasi*, doubtless from the circumstance that the Jews were accustomed to receive their festival calendar from their *Nasi* (Patriarch).

The Jews even succeeded in instructing the Arabs in regard to their historical origin, concerning which their memories were void, and in their credulity the latter accepted this genealogy as the true one. It was of great consequence to the Jews to be regarded and acknowledged by the Arabs as their kinsmen, and too many points of social interest were bound up with this relationship for them to allow it to escape their attention. The holy city of Mecca (*Alcharam*), the centre of the country, was built round an ancient temple (*Kaaba*, the Square) or more properly, round a black stone; it was an asylum for all Arabs, in which the sword durst not quit the sheath. The five fairs, the most important of which was at *Okaz*, could only be frequented in the four holy months of the year, when the truce of God prevailed. Whoever desired to take advantage of these periods and to enjoy security of life in the midst of a warlike people not over-scrupulous in the matter of shedding blood, was obliged to establish his affinity to the Arabs, otherwise he was excluded from these privileges.

Happily, the Arabian Jews bethought them of the genealogy of the Arabs as set forth in the first book of the Pentateuch, and seized upon it as the instrument by which to prove their kinship with them. The Jews were convinced that they were related to the Arabs on two sides, through *Yoktan* and *Ishmael*. Under their instruction, therefore, the two principal Arabian tribes traced back the line of their ancestors to these two progenitors, the

real Arabs (the Himyarites) supposing themselves to be descended from Yoktan, the pseudo or northern Arabs, on the other hand, derived their origin from Ishmael. With the help of these points of contact the Jews had ample opportunity of multiplying the proofs of their relationship. The Arabs loved genealogical tables, and were delighted to be able to follow their descent and history so far into hoary antiquity; accordingly, all this appeared to them both evident and flattering. They consequently exerted themselves to bring their genealogical records and traditions into unison with the Biblical accounts. Although their remembrance hardly extended over six centuries, on the one side to their progenitor Yarob and his sons or grandsons Himyar and Kachtan, and on the other to Adnan, yet in their utter disregard of historical accuracy, this fact constituted no obstacle. Without a scruple, the south Arabians immediately called themselves Kachtanites, and the north Arabians Ishmaelites. They readily accorded the Jews the rights of relationship, that is to say, equality and all the advantages following from it.

The Arabs were thus placed in intimate intercourse with the Jews, and the sons of the desert, whose unpoetical mythology afforded them no matter for inspiration, derived much instruction from Judaism. Under these circumstances many Arabs could not fail to contract a peculiar affection for Judaism, and some embraced this religion, though their conversion had not been actually aimed at by the Jews. As they had practised circumcision while heathens, their conversion to Judaism was particularly easy. Their close inter-connection, and the absorption of the members of the family in the tribe, according to the phylarchic constitution of the Arabs, made it necessary in the interest of order that when the chieftain, as the wisest, became a Jew, he should forthwith bring

over his whole clan with him. It is expressly recorded of several Arabian tribes, that they were converted to Judaism; such were the Benu-Kinannah, a warlike, quarrelsome clan, related to the most respected Koraishites of Mecca, and several other families of the tribes Aus and Chazraj in Yathrib.

Especially memorable, however, in the history of the Arabs is the conversion to Judaism of a powerful king of Yemen. The princes or kings of Yemen bore the name of Tobba, and often ruled over the whole of Arabia; they traced their historical origin as far as Himyar, their legendary origin to Kachtan. One of these kings, who went by the name of Abu-Kariba Assad-Tobban, was a man of judgment, knowledge, and poetical endowments, and was possessed of a valour which incited him to conquest. Abu-Kariba undertook therefore (about 500) an expedition against Persia and the Arabian provinces of the Byzantine empire. On his march he touched at the north Arabian capital of Yathrib, and left his son there as governor, not expecting treachery from the inhabitants of this town. Hardly, however, had he proceeded further, when he received the sad intelligence that the people of Yathrib had killed his son. Smitten with grief, he turned back in order to wreak a bloody vengeance on the perfidious city, and laid siege to it with his numerous band of warriors, after cutting down the palm trees, from which the inhabitants derived their principal sustenance. A Jewish poet seized upon this opportunity to sing an elegy to the ruined palm trees, which the Arabs loved like living beings, and the destruction of which they bewailed like the death of dear relatives. The Jews rivalled the Chazraj Arabs in bravery in resisting Abu-Kariba's attack, and finally succeeded in tiring out his troops. During the siege, the Himyarite king was seized with a severe illness,

and no fresh water could be discovered in the neighbourhood to quench his burning thirst. Two Jewish teachers of the Law from Yathrib, Kaab and Assad by name, took advantage of Abu-Kariba's exhaustion to betake themselves to his tent, and to persuade him to pardon the inhabitants of Yathrib and raise the siege. The Arabs have woven a tissue of legend about this interview, but this much is certain, that the Jewish sages found opportunity to discourse to Abu-Kariba of Judaism, and succeeded in inspiring him with a lively interest for it. The exhortations of Kaab and Assad roused his sympathy to such a pitch that he determined to embrace the Jewish faith, and induced the Himyarite army to do likewise.

At his desire the two Jewish sages of Yathrib accompanied him to Yemen, in order to convert his people to Judaism. This conversion, however, was not over easy, for a nation does not cast off its opinions, usages, and vices at will. There remained as many heathens as Jews in the land, who retained their temples, and were allowed to profess their religion unmolested. Altogether the Judaism which the king of Yemen professed must have been very superficial, and cannot have penetrated deeply into the customs or the mode of living of the people. A prince of the noble tribe of the Kendites, a nephew of the king of Yemen, Harith Ibn-Amru by name, also embraced the Jewish faith. Abu-Kariba appointed him as viceroy of the Maaddites on the Red Sea, and also gave him the government of Mecca and Yathrib. With Harith a number of the Kendites also went over to Judaism. The news that there were a Jewish king and a Jewish empire in the most beautiful and fertile part of Arabia was spread abroad by the numerous foreigners who visited the country for the purpose of trade, and reached the Jews of the most distant lands. It was asserted that they had emigrated here before the destruc-

tion of the First Temple and the fall of the Israelite kingdom.

Abu-Kariba's reign did not last long after he had adopted Judaism. His warlike nature prevented him from maintaining peace and caused him to engage in bold enterprises. It is said that in one of these campaigns he was slain by his own people, who were worn out with fatigue and weary marches. He left behind three sons who were all under age: Hassan, Amru, and Zorah.

Zorah, the youngest (520—530), was nicknamed Dhu-Nowas (curly-locks) on account of his fine head of hair. He was a zealous disciple of Judaism, and for that reason gave himself the Hebrew name of Yussuf. But his zeal for religion, of which his father had also been an enthusiastic advocate, drove him into continual difficulties, and brought misfortunes on him, his kingdom, and the Jews of Himyara. King Zorah Yussuf Dhu-Nowas had heard how his co-religionists in the Byzantine kingdom suffered from daily persecution. He felt deeply for them, and wished therefore to force the Byzantine emperors by retaliation to render justice to the Jews. When some Roman (Byzantine) merchants were travelling on business one day through Himyara, the king had them seized and put to death. This spread terror amongst the Christian merchants, who traded with the country whence come the sweet perfumes and the wealth of India. It also caused the Indian and Arabian trade to decline. In consequence of this Dhu-Nowas involved his people in an exhausting war.

A neighbouring king, Aidug, who still adhered to heathenism, reproached the Jewish king for his impolitic step in destroying the trade with Europe. The excuse Dhu-Nowas made was that many notable Jews in Byzantium were innocently put to death every year. This, however, made no impression upon Aidug. He declared war against

Dhu-Nowas and defeated him in battle (521). As the outcome of his victory, Aidug is said to have embraced Christianity. Dhu-Nowas was not killed in this battle, as the Christian authorities relate, but made another effort, and through his impetuosity entangled himself in new difficulties. Najaran, in Yemen, was inhabited chiefly by Christians; it had, too, a Christian chief, Harith (Aretas) Ibn-Kaleb, who was a feudatory of the kingdoms of Judæa and Himyara. Harith did not wish to perform his feudatory duties in the war against Aidug, lest he should be declared a rebel. One account relates, that two young Jews were murdered in Najaran, of which the chief Harith was cognisant, and which therefore displeased the Jewish king. This was enough—Dhu-Nowas had a pretext for chastising the ruler of Najaran as a rebel. He besieged the town, and reduced the inhabitants to such straits that they were forced to capitulate. Three hundred and forty chosen men with Harith at their head, repaired to Dhu-Nowas's camp to sign the terms of peace (523). There, it is said, the king of Himyara, although he had assured the men of immunity, determined to force them either to accept Judaism or to be put to death. As they refused to renounce their faith, it is reported that they were executed, and their bodies thrown into the river. The information is only so far historically true, that Dhu-Nowas levied a heavy tribute on the Christians in the kingdom of Himyara, as a reprisal for the persecution of his co-religionists in Christian countries.

The news of the events in Najaran spread like wildfire; the number of the victims was exaggerated, and the punishment of the rebels was stigmatised as a persecution of the Christians on the part of a Jewish king. An elegy was composed on the martyrs. Simeon, a Syrian bishop, who was travelling to northern Arabia, did his utmost to rouse up enemies

against Dhu-Nowas. Simeon believed the exaggerated account which had been circulated. He sent a letter, powerfully and strongly worded, to another bishop who lived near Arabia, imploring him to set the Christians against the Jewish king, and to incite the Nejus (king) of Ethiopia to war against him. He also proposed to imprison the teachers of Judaism in Tiberias, and to compel them for their own sakes to write to Dhu-Nowas so as to put a stop to the persecution of the Christians. The Emperor Justinus the First, a weak and foolish old man, was also asked to make war on the Jewish king. But his people were engaged in a war against the Persians, and he therefore replied, "Himyara is too far from us, and I cannot allow my army to march through a sandy desert for such a distance. But I will write to the King of Ethiopia to send troops to Himyara."

Thus many enemies conspired to ruin one who had attempted to assist his co-religionists in every way. Dhu-Nowas' most formidable enemy was Elesbaa (Atzbaha), the Nejus of Ethiopia, a monarch full of religious zeal. He beheld with jealousy the crown on the head of a Jew, and required no persuading to fight, for the Jewish kingdom had long been a thorn in his side. Elesbaa equipped a powerful fleet, which the Emperor of Byzantium or rather young Justinian, its joint ruler, reinforced with ships from Egypt. A numerous army crossed the narrow straits of the Red Sea to Yemen. The Christian soldiers were united with this army. Dhu-Nowas, it is true, took measures to prevent the debarkation of the Ethiopian army by barring the landing-place with chains, and concentrating an army on his side. The army of Himyara was far less numerous than that of Ethiopia, but the king relied on his faithful and courageous cavalry. The first engagement terminated disastrously for Dhu-Nowas. The town of Zafara (Thafar) fell into the

hands of the enemy and with it the queen and the treasures. The Himyaran soldiers lost all courage. Yussuf Dhu-Nowas, who saw that there was no escape, and who was unwilling to fall into the hands of his overwhelming enemy, plunged off a rock with his steed into the sea, his body being carried far away (530). The victorious Ethiopians pursued the Himyarans with fire and sword, plundering and massacring them; the unarmed they took as prisoners. They were so enraged with the Jews in Himyara that they massacred thousands to expiate the supposed Christian martyrs of Najaran. Such was the end of the Jewish kingdom of Himyara, which arose in a night and disappeared in a night.

It happened about this same time, that the Jews of Yathrib entered upon a great war with the neighbouring tribes of Arabia. The Jews in Yathrib ruled over the heathen races of Arabia on account of their intimate relation with the king of Himyara, whose authority extended over the province, and a Jewish chief undertook the government. The Arabians of the Kailan race (Aus and Chazraj) were averse to the rule of the Jews and seized an opportunity of rebelling when the Jews could not rely on any assistance from Himyara. An Arabian chief of the Ghassanid race, Harith Ibn Abu Shammir, who was closely related to the Kailan race, advanced with his troops towards Yathrib. This brave and adventurous prince of Arabia, who was attached to the Byzantine court, accepted the invitation. In order to render the Jews unsuspecting, Ibn Abu Shammir professed to be reconnoitring the country towards Himyara. He encamped near Yathrib and invited the Jewish chiefs to visit him. Many of them came, expecting to be welcomed with the prince's usual generosity, and to be loaded with presents. But as they entered the tent of the Ghassanid prince they were one by one murdered. Whereupon Ibn Abu Shammir exclaimed

to the Arabians of Yathrib: "I have freed you from a great part of your enemies; now it will be easy for you to master the rest, if you have strength and courage." He then departed. The Arabians, however, did not venture to engage openly with the Jews, but had recourse to a stratagem. During a banquet, all the Jewish chiefs were killed, as well as Alghitjun or Sherif, the Jewish prince. Deprived of their leaders, the Jews of Yathrib were easily conquered by the Arabians and they were obliged to give up their strongest place to them (530—535). At first they could not get over the loss of their ruler and the sense of defeat. The insecurity of their lives intensified their hatred, and they gradually placed themselves under the protection of one or another race, and so became dependents (Mawâli) of Aus and Chazraj. They hoped for the coming of the Messiah to enable them to crush their enemy.

Harith Ibn Abu Shammir, the Ghassanid prince, after his return from Yathrib commenced a feud with a Jewish poet, who was renowned throughout Arabia. Samuel Ibn-Adiya (born about 500 and died about 560) had proved himself a born soldier in the attacks of the Ghassanids. He won immortality through his friendship with the celebrated poet of Arabia, who lived before Mahomet's epoch. His stories give an insight into the mode of living amongst the Jews of Arabia of that time. According to some, Samuel was descended from an infidel race of the Ghassanids; according to others he was of Jewish origin, or to be more correct, he had an Arabian mother and a Jewish father. Adiya, his father, had lived at first in Yathrib, until he had built a castle in the neighbourhood of Taima. This he named Al-ablak, because of its many colours; it has been immortalised in Arabian poetry. Samuel, the chief of a small tribe, was so revered in Hejas, that the smaller tribes in Arabia placed themselves

under his protection. Ablak was a refuge for the persecuted and exiled. The owner of the castle defended those under his roof to the utmost extent in his power. Imrulkais Ibn Hojr, the then poet laureate of Arabia, and an adventurous son of the Kendite prince, was watched both secretly and openly by his enemies. He was therefore restricted in his movements, and could not find shelter anywhere except in Samuel's safe retreat.

The Jewish poet, the lord of the castle, was proud to afford a refuge to Arabia's most celebrated writer, whose fame and adventures were renowned throughout the peninsula. Imrulkais took his daughter and what remained of his retinue to Ablak and lived there for some time. As the Kendite prince had no prospect of obtaining the assistance of the Arabians to avenge the murder of his father, and to regain his paternal inheritance, he endeavoured to win over Justinian, the Byzantine Emperor. Before starting on his journey, he gave to his daughter, his cousin, and to Samuel five valuable coats of chain armour, and other arms with which to protect themselves. Samuel promised to guard the persons and the goods entrusted to him as he would the apple of his eye. But these arms brought misfortune on him. When the Ghassanid prince was in Hejas, he went to Ablak, Samuel's castle, and demanded the surrender of Imrulkais' arms. Samuel refused to surrender them, according to his promise. Harith then prepared to lay a regular siege to the castle. Finding it, however, impregnable, the tyrant had recourse to a barbarous expedient to compel Samuel to submit. One of Samuel's sons was taken outside the citadel by his nurse, and Harith captured him, and threatened to kill him if his father did not carry out his wishes. The unfortunate father only hesitated for a moment between duty to his guest and affection for his son; the former had the first place and he said to the Ghassanid prince: "Do

what you will; time always avenges treachery, and my son has brothers." Unmoved by such magnanimity, the despot slew the son before his father's eyes. Nevertheless, Harith had to withdraw from Ablak without accomplishing his object. The Arab proverb, "Faithful as Samuel," always used to express undying faith, originated from this circumstance.

Many blamed him for the sacrifice of his son; but he defended himself powerfully in a poem, full of noble sentiments, courage and chivalrous ideas:—

Oh, ye censurers, cease to blame the man,
 Who so oft has tried to defy censure.
 You should, when erring, have guided me aright,
 Instead of leading me astray with empty words.
 I have preserved the Kendite coats of mail;
 Another may betray the trust confided him!
 Thus did, Adiya, my father, counsel me in bygone days,
 "Oh, Samuel, destroy not what I have built up!"
 For me he built a strong and safe place, where
 I ne'er feared to give defiance to my oppressor.

Before his death (about 560) Samuel could look back with conscious pride on his chivalrous life and on the protection he had afforded the weak. His swan-song runs:—

Oh, would that I knew, the day my loss is lamented,
 What testimony my mourners would afford me;
 Whether they will say "Stay with us! For
 In many a trouble you have comforted us;
 The rights you had you ne'er resigned,
 Yet needed no reminder to give theirs to other."

Shoraich, his son, followed in his father's footsteps. He was a brave and noble man. Maimun Asha, the celebrated Arabian poet, had an ungovernable temper, which made him many enemies. Being pursued by an adversary one day, he was captured, and taken, as it happened, with the other prisoners (unknown to Shoraich) to the castle of Taima. Here, in order to obtain his release, he sang a poem in praise of Samuel:—

Be like Samuel, when the fierce warrior
Pressed heavily around him with his array ;
"Choose between the loss of a child and faithlessness !
Oh, evil choice which thou hast to make."
But quickly and calmly did he reply :
"Kill thy captive, I fulfil my pledges."

Towards the end of the sixth century, the Jews of Yathrib had nearly recovered from the oppressive blows dealt them by their neighbours in Arabia. Their rulers, the Aus and Chazraj, had exhausted themselves in bloody feuds which lasted twenty years, whilst their allies suffered less. In consequence of another war between the same tribes the Jews again rose into importance in Yathrib.

Judaism had not only won over to its side many tribes in Arabia, and taught the sons of the desert certain arts, both indispensable and useful; but it also aroused the founder of a religion, who played an important part in the great drama of the world's history, and whose influence survives to this day. Mahomet, the prophet of Mecca and Yathrib, was, it is true, no loyal son of Judaism, but approached to its highest aims, and was induced by it to give to the world a new faith, founded on a lofty basis and known as Islam. This religion has exercised a wonderful influence on the aspect of Jewish history and on the evolution of Judaism. In the peaceful meetings in Mecca, his birthplace, Abdallah's son heard much spoken in the temples and on his travels of the religion which acknowledges the belief in one God who rules the world. He heard much of Abraham, who devoted himself to the service of God, and of religion and morality, which gave the disciples of Judaism the advantage over infidels. Mahomet's mind, at once original and receptive, was powerfully impressed by all this. Waraka Ibn-Naufal, a celebrated Meccan, and a descendant of the noble Khoraish race, was a cousin of Chadija, Mahomet's wife, and he had embraced Judaism and knew Hebrew well. He

certainly imbued Mahomet with a love for the religion of Abraham.

Mahomet's first doctrines were strongly marked with a Jewish colouring. These doctrines he conceived when suffering from epilepsy, and he communicated them to his friends, pretending to have received them as the higher revelation of the angel Gabriel. First and foremost he put the simple but fundamental principle of Judaism: "There is no God but Allah"; later his pride added to this a confession of faith "and Mahomet is his prophet." When he said of this God, that there are no gods beside Him (anti-trinity); when he said, He may not be represented by any image; when he preached against the dissolute idolatry, which was practised with 300 idols in the Kaaba; when he declaimed against the immorality, which was openly and shamelessly practised amongst the Arabs; when he condemned the revolting vices of parents who threw their newborn daughters into the water to be rid of them or from fear of the future; and when he gave out that there was nothing new in all this, but that it was the faith of the ancient religion of Abraham, Judaism could but see in it a victory of its own truths and a fulfilment of the prophecies "that one day every knee will bend itself to the only God, and every tongue will worship Him." A similar thing had happened at the time when Paul of Tarsus first made known to the Hellenes the history and substance of Judaism.

The best teachings in the Koran are borrowed from the Bible or the Talmud. In consequence of the difficulties which Mahomet had to encounter for several years (612—622) in Mecca on account of these purified doctrines, there grew around the noble kernel a loathsome husk. Mahomet's connection with the Jews of Arabia assisted not a little in determining and modifying the purport of the teachings of Islam. Portions of the Koran are dedi-

cated to them, partly in a friendly and partly in an adverse sense.

When Mahomet failed in obtaining a hearing in Mecca, the seat of the idolatrous worship in Arabia, and even ran the risk of losing his life there, he addressed himself to some men from Yathrib and urged them to accept his doctrines. These men were more familiar than the Meccans with the exposition of the Jewish doctrines of religion ; they found in Mahomet's revelations a close analogy to what they had often heard from their Jewish neighbours. They, therefore, showed themselves inclined to follow him, and brought their families to him, inviting him to Yathrib, where his teachings would be favourably received by the numerous Jews residing there. As soon as he came there (622, the year of expatriation—Hejira), Mahomet took care to win over the Jews of Yathrib and to set forth his aims, as though he desired to bring about the universal recognition of Judaism in Arabia. When he saw the Jews fasting on the day of Atonement he said, “ It becomes us more than Jews to fast on this day,” and he established the fast-day (Ashura). Mahomet entered into a formal alliance with the Jewish tribes for mutual defence, and instituted the custom of turning the face towards Jerusalem at prayer (Kiblah). In the disputes between the Jews and his disciples (Moslems), which were meant to be a test, he behaved leniently to the Jews. For this reason, Mahomet's disciples preferred to bring their matters in dispute before a Jewish chief, because they expected more impartiality from him than from Mahomet. Mahomet for a long time employed a Jewish scribe to do his correspondence, he himself being unable to write. These advances on the part of a man of so much promise were very flattering to the Jews of Medina. They looked upon him to some extent as a Jewish proselyte and expected to see Judaism attain to power in Arabia through him.

Some of them followed him devoutly and were his helpmates (Ansar); amongst them was a learned youth, Abdallah Ibn-Salâm of the race of Kainukaa. Abdallah and other Jews assisted Mahomet in propagating the Koran. The unbelieving Arabs reproached him often enough "that he has ears (accepts everything as true) for the teachings of a man but not for the Angel Gabriel." Nevertheless, though Abdallah Ibn-Salâm and other Jewish Ansars supported him, they were far from abandoning Judaism on this account, and continued to observe the Jewish commandments, and Mahomet was not offended at first by this conduct.

But only a small number of the Jews of Medina joined the band of believers, particularly when they perceived his interested efforts, his haughtiness, and his insatiable love of women. They bore in their hearts too high an ideal of their ancient prophets to place this enthusiast, who longed after every beautiful woman, on an equal footing with them. "See him," said the Jews: "he is not satisfied with food, and has no other desire than that of being surrounded by women. If he is a prophet, he should confine himself to his duties as a prophet, and not turn to women." Other Jews said: "If Mahomet is a prophet, he should appear in Palestine, if only to reveal himself there as God's elect." The Jews also objected to him, saying, "You pride yourself on being of Abraham's faith, but Abraham did not use the flesh and milk of camels." Mahomet's chief opponents on the Jewish side were Pinehas Ibn-Azura, a man of caustic wit, who seized every opportunity to make Mahomet appear ridiculous; furthermore, that far-famed Kaab Ibn-Asharaf, the offspring of an Arabian father and Jewish mother; a poet Abu-Afak, an old man more than a hundred years old, who endeavoured to make Mahomet hated amongst the ignorant Arabs; and Abdallah, Saura's son, who was looked

upon as the most learned Jew in Hejas. Pinehas delivered a striking speech, in which he reproached Mahomet for having invited the Jewish tribe of Benu-Kainukaa to accept Islamism. Mahomet, in his epistle, used the words, "Give a beautiful gift to God." Pinehas answered, "God is not so poor that He demands a gift from us." Thus the Jewish opponents of Mahomet placed a ridiculous meaning on sayings and revelations, and treated him contemptuously, not anticipating that the fugitive from Mecca, who had come to Medina for assistance, would shortly humble and in part destroy their tribes, and that he would control the destiny of many of their co-religionists in times to come. They reckoned too much on their own courage and strength, and forgot that the most dangerous enemy is he whom one disregards too much. Mahomet, indeed, at first treated with apparent equanimity the contempt bestowed on him by the Jews, and dissimulated cleverly. He advised his disciples, "Fight, only in a becoming manner, with the people who believe in the Holy Writ (Jews), and say: We believe in that which has been revealed to us and to you. Our God and yours is one and the same, and we are faithful to Him." But for a long time the mutual discontent made it difficult to maintain peace. On one side, the Jews did their best to alienate Mahomet's followers. They also succeeded in prejudicing the first man in Medina, the Chazrajite Abdallah Ibn-Ubey against Mahomet, so that he remained antagonistic to Mahomet to the end of his days. This man was about to be elected king of his town, but through the arrival of Mahomet had been cast into the shade. On the other side, his followers urged him, and also themselves determined, to prove how far he held true to Judaism. They saw that his disciples amongst the Jews still continued to observe the Jewish laws, and to abstain from camel's flesh,

and they asked him, "If the Torah be a divine book, then let us also follow its teachings." Since Mahomet was thoroughly an Arab, he could not join Judaism; on the other hand he perceived that the Arabs would not conform to religious customs which were quite strange to them, and so it only remained for him to definitively break with the Jews. He thereupon gave forth a long Sura (called the Sura of the Cow), full of invectives against the Jews. He altered the position assumed in prayer, and decreed that the believers should no longer turn their faces towards Jerusalem, but towards Mecca and the Kaaba. He discarded fasting on the day of Atonement (Ashura), and instituted instead the holy month Ramadhan, as had been customary among the Arabs from very ancient times. He was obliged to withdraw much of what he had given out at first as God's revelation. Mahomet now asserted that the Torah had contained many allusions to his appearance and calling as a prophet, but that the Jews had obliterated the passages. At first he had declared that the Jews were possessed of the true faith; later on he said that they honoured Ezra (Ozaia) as the son of God, just as the Christians did with Jesus, and that the Jews were consequently to be regarded as infidels. His hatred against the Jews, who refused to accept his prophecies and saw through his designs, continually widened the breach between them and him.

Although he hated the Jews in his innermost heart, yet he did not venture to provoke them by acts of violence, because his authority was not sufficiently great, and the Jews overmatched his followers in number and unity. But after the battle at Bedr (in the winter of 624) when the few Mahometans gained a victory over the numerous Koraishites, the situation became changed. Mahomet, whose power was greatly increased through this victory, exchanged the attitude of a humble

prophet for that of a fanatical tyrant, to whom every art, and even assassination, was a justifiable means of freeing himself from his enemies. In the meantime, he controlled himself so as to avoid becoming engaged in disputes with the powerful Jewish tribes, but he began with the weak and defenceless. A poetess, Asma, daughter of Merwan, who was of Jewish descent, and married to an Arab, was murdered at night whilst asleep (because she had composed satires against the false prophet), whereupon the Jewish tribe Kainukaa first experienced his religious wrath. It was the weakest of the Jewish-Arabian tribes, and to it belonged that Pinehas Ibn-Azura, who ridiculed Mahomet by his sarcastic wit. The pretext was insignificant. A Mahometan had killed a Jew on account of a simple jest, and the Kainukaa avenged his death. Mahomet thereupon challenged them to profess Islamism, or to accept war as the alternative. They replied: "We are, it is true, for peace, and would gladly maintain our alliance with you; but since you desire to make war upon us, we will show that we have no fear." They reckoned upon the assistance of the tribes of Nadhir and Kuraiza, who were their co-religionists, and withdrew to their fortresses at Medina. Mahomet collected his troops, and besieged the Kainukaa. Had the numerous Jews of Northern Arabia, Nadhir, Kuraiza, and those of Chaibar, who, like the Kainukaa, were also endangered, come to their assistance, and had they made an offensive and defensive alliance before it was too late, they would have been able to crush Mahomet and his scanty following, on whose fidelity even he could not entirely rely. But the Jews, like the Arabs, suffered through being scattered, and each tribe had only its own interests in view. The Kainukaa fought desperately for fifteen days, and were expecting reinforcements from their co-religionists. But as these did not

come, they surrendered to the enemy. Mahomet had all the Jews of Kainukaa put in chains with the intention of killing them ; but a forbidding word from Abdallah Ibn-Ubey, their ally, made him draw back with alarm from his purpose. Abdallah laid hold of his shirt of mail, and said : “ I will not let you go until you promise me to spare the captives ; for they constitute my strength : they have defended me against the black people and the red people.” To which Mahomet replied : “ Let them be free ; may God condemn them, and Abdallah with them !” The Jews of Kainukaa, 700 in number, were obliged to leave their possessions behind them, and set out for Palestine in a most destitute condition (February, 624). They settled in Batanea, whose chief town was Adraat, where they were probably received in a fraternal manner by their co-religionists, who, at this time, were free from the Byzantine yoke.

After the victory over the Kainukaa Mahomet communicated to the Moslems a revelation against the Jews which deprived them of every protection : “ O ye believers, choose ye not Jews and Christians as allies ; they may protect themselves. He who befriends them is one of them ; God tolerates no sinful people.” This exclusion was less harmful to the Christians, as they were not numerously represented in northern Arabia and generally kept themselves neutral. The Jews, on the contrary, who were accustomed to independence, and who were full of warlike courage, became involved in numerous disputes by this act of outlawry. Their former allies for the most part renounced them and took spiteful vengeance on them at Mahomet’s bidding.

With this mutual and deadly hatred existing between Mahomet and the Jews, it is said that the Benu-Nadhir invited him one day to their castle of Zuhara with the intention of hurling him from the terraces and thus ending his life. At that time their

chief was Hujej Ibn-Achtab. Mahomet accepted the invitation, but watched the movements of the Jews; suspecting that they desired his death, he stole away and hastened to Medina. The Jews of Nadhir paid dearly, it is said, for this treacherous project. Mahomet gave them the choice of quitting their homes within ten days or of preparing themselves for death. The Nadhir were resolved at first to avoid war and to emigrate, but encouraged by Abdallah, who promised them assistance, they accepted the challenge which had been thrown down. They, however, waited in vain for the assistance promised to them. Mahomet commenced operations against them, and uprooted and burnt the date-trees which supplied them with food. His own people rebelled at this proceeding, for to these unscrupulous warriors a palm was more holy than a man's life. After several days of siege, the Nadhir were obliged to capitulate, and the terms were that they should depart without arms and that they should only take a certain portion of their possessions, as much as a camel could carry.

They thereupon emigrated to the number of six hundred, some of them going to their fellow countrymen in Chaibar, and some settling in Jericho and Adraat (June-July 625). The war against the Nadhirites was, later on, justified by Mahomet through a revelation of the Koran, which read: "All in the heavens and earth praise God; He is the most honoured, the most wise. He it is who drove out the unbelievers amongst the people of the Book from their dwelling places (Kainukaa); to send them to those who had already emigrated. You thought not that they would go forth, they themselves thought that their strong places would protect them from God himself, but God attacked them unexpectedly, and threw terror into their hearts, so that their houses were destroyed with their own hands, as well as laid waste by believers." The exiled

Benu-Nadhir, who had remained in Arabia did not accept their misfortune quietly, but exerted themselves to form a coalition with the enemies of Mahomet in order to attack him with combined forces. Three respected Nadhirites, Hujej, Kinanah Ibn-ol-Rabia, and Sallam Ibn Mishkam incited the Koraishites in Mecca, to make war in alliance with the mighty tribe of the Chatafan and others against the haughty tyrannical prophet, who became daily mightier and more cruel. The enemies of Mahomet in Mecca, though filled with rage against their fellow tribesmen, were yet first incited to a fresh contest by the Jews.

Through the activity of the Nadhirites the Arabian tribes were induced to join in the war. They found it more difficult, however, to induce their co-religionists the Benu-Kuraiza to take part in it with them. Kaab-Ibn-Assad, the governor of Kuraiza at first would not even receive the Nadhirite Hujej, who had desired his protection because his tribe had made an alliance with Mahomet and the Moslems, and he had been so guileless as to rely on Mahomet's word. Hujej managed to convince him of the danger which threatened them, as Jews, on the part of Mahomet, and, at the same time too, of the victory which so many allies must necessarily gain over the less numerous Moslems. In consequence of this persuasion the Benu-Kuraiza united with him. Ten thousand of the allied troops took the field, and attempted to surprise Medina. Mahomet, forewarned by a deserter, with great coolness allowed his army, though inferior in numbers, to fight a pitched battle. He at the same time fortified Medina by surrounding it with a deep ditch and other defences. The Arabs, trained in the manner of cavalry to engage in single combat, discharged their arrows against the fortifications without result. Mahomet, however, succeeded finally in sowing the seeds of a mutual distrust between the

chief allies, viz., the Koraishites, the Chatafan and the Jews.

The "War of the ditch" terminated favourably for Mahomet and very unhappily for the Jews, upon whom the whole of his anger now fell. For on the very day after the departure of the allies, Mahomet took the field against Kuraiza with 3,000 men, announcing publicly that in thus acting he was obeying an express revelation. His next step was to arouse the enthusiasm of his followers in the cause of the war. "Let him that is obedient offer up his prayers in the neighbourhood of Kuraiza," was the formula with which he exhorted them. The Jews, unable openly to resist, retired to their fortresses, which they put into a state of defence. Here they were besieged by Mahomet and his troops for twenty-five days (February—March, 627). Food then began to fail the besieged, and it became necessary to think of capitulation. They besought Mahomet to treat them as he had treated their brethren the Nadhirites, viz., to allow them to withdraw with their wives, their children, and a portion of their property. The vindictive prophet, however, refused their request and demanded an unconditional surrender.

Nearly 700 Jews, amongst them the chiefs Kaab and Hujei, were ruthlessly slaughtered in the market place, and their bodies thrown into a common grave. The market-place of Kuraiza became notorious in history for this event. And all this was done in the name of God! The Koran makes reference to it in the following verse: "God drove into exile, from their strong fortresses, those of the people of the Book" (the Jews) "who assisted the allies, and brought fear to their heart. Some of them you killed, some you took captive; he has given you for an inheritance, their land which you have never trodden before. God is all powerful." The women were bartered for weapons and

horses. Mahomet wished to retain one of the captives, a beautiful girl, Rihana by name, as his concubine; she, however, proudly rejected his advances. Only one inhabitant of Kuraiza remained alive, a certain Zabir Ibn-Bata, and he only by the intercession of Thabit, one of his comrades. Full of joy, the latter hastened to the aged Zabir, to tell him of his fortune. "I thank thee," said the Jewish sage, who lay in fetters; "but tell me what has become of our leader Kaab?" "He is dead," answered Thabit. "And Hujej-Ibn-Achtab, the prince of the Jews?" "He is dead," he again replied. "And Azzel-Ibn-Samuel, the fearless warrior?" "He, too, is dead," was his answer again. "Then I too have no right to live," said Zabir. The old man then begged that he might die by the hands of his friend. His wish was granted.

A year later came the turn of the Jews in the district of Chaibar, a confederacy of small Jewish states. This war, however, was protracted to a long campaign, in consequence of the fact that there were a number of fortresses which were put into a good state of repair and were well defended. The exiled Nadhirites in Chaibar roused their comrades to a vigorous resistance. The Arab races of Chatafan and Fezara promised their assistance. The leading spirit of the Chaibarites was the exiled Nadhirite Kinanah Ibn Rabia, a man who possessed indomitable firmness and courage. He was called the King of the Jews. On his side was Marhab, a giant of Himyarite extraction. Mahomet, before the beginning of the war, occupied himself in prayer to God, beseeching him to grant him a victory over the men of Chaibar. The war, in which Mahomet employed 14,000 troops, lasted almost two months (Spring 628).

The war against Chaibar now assumed the same character as that which was waged against the other

Jewish tribes. It was commenced by Mahomet, who cut down the palm trees, and invested the small fortresses, which surrendered after a short resistance. He received the most vigorous resistance from the fortress Kamuss, which was built on a steep rock. The Mahometans were several times beaten back by the Jews. Abu-Bekr and Omar, Mahomet's two bravest generals, lost their distinction as unconquered heroes before the walls of Kamuss. Marhab performed wonderful feats of valour, to avenge the death of his brother who had fallen in the war.

When Mahomet sent his third general, Ali, against him, the Jewish hero addressed him thus, "Chaibar knows my valour; I am Marhab the hero, well armed and tried in the field." He then challenged Ali to single combat. But his time had come. He fell at the hands of an adversary. After many attempts the enemy succeeded in effecting an entrance into the fortress. How the captives fared is by no means ascertained. Kinanah was captured and put on the rack that he might discover his hidden treasures. But he bore pain and even death without uttering a word. After the fortress had fallen the Jews lost courage, and the other fortresses surrendered on condition that the garrisons should be allowed to withdraw. They were subsequently allowed to take possession of their lands, and had only to pay a half of their produce annually as tribute. The Mahometan conquerors took possession of all the movable property, and returned home laden with the spoils of the Jews. Fadak, Wadil-Kora and Taima also submitted. Their inhabitants were allowed to remain in their land, according to agreement. The year 628 was especially distinguished by fatalities for the Jews. It marks the victory of Mahomet over the Jews of Chaibar, the decay of the last independent Jewish races, and the persecution of the

Jews of Palestine by the Emperor Heraclius, who had, for a short time, again taken up arms. The sword which the Hasmoneans had wielded in defence of their religion, and which was in turn worn by the Zealots and the Arabian Jews, was wrung from the hands of the last Jewish heroes of Chaibar, and henceforth the Jews had to make use of another buckler, for the protection of their sanctuary.

Mahomet had brought two pretty Jewish women with him from the war at Chaibar: Safia, the daughter of his inveterate enemy, the Nadhirite Hujej, and Zainab, the sister of Marhab. This courageous woman bethought herself of an artifice whereby she might avenge the murder of her co-religionist and relative. She pretended to be friendly towards him and entertained him. Mahomet unsuspectingly partook of a poisoned dish, which she had set before him and his companions. One of them died from the effects of it. But Mahomet, who, owing to his dislike of the dish, had scarcely tasted it, was saved for the moment, but suffered for a long time, and felt the effects of the poison even to the hour of his death. Questioned as to the reason of her action, Zainab coolly replied, "You have persecuted my people with untold afflictions, I therefore thought that you were simply a warrior, and that I could procure rest for them through poison; I imagined that if you were really a prophet, God would have warned you in time, and you would have come to no harm."

Mahomet thereupon ordered her to be put to death, and commanded his troops not to use any of the captured vessels of the Jews before they had been scalded. The rest of the Jews did not even now give up the hope of freeing themselves of their arch-enemy. They intrigued against him, and made common cause with some ill-disposed Arabs. The house of a Jew Suwailim in

Medina was the appointed meeting place for the malcontents, whom Mahomet and his fanatic followers named "the hypocrites" (Munafikun). This plot, however, was discovered, and Suwailim's house burnt to the ground. The Jews in Arabia felt a real joy at Mahomet's death (632), because they, like others, believed that the Arabs would be cured of their false belief, that he was a higher being endowed with immortality. But fanaticism, together with the love of war and conquest, had already taken possession of the Arabians, and they accepted as the irrefragible Word of God the hateful pages of the Koran, just as they did the truths therein that had been borrowed from Judaism. Judaism now found in Islam a second unnatural child. The Koran was the book of faith of a great part of humanity in three parts of the world, and, being full of hostile expressions against the Jews, it naturally urged on the Mahometans to acts of hostility against the Jews. This is paralleled by the effect which the Apostles and the Evangelists produced upon the Christians. So great was the fanaticism of the second Caliph, Omar, a man of a wild and energetic nature, that he broke the treaty made by Mahomet with the Jews of Chaibar and Wadil Kora. He drove them from their lands, as he did also the Christians of Najaran, that the holy ground of Arabia might not be desecrated by Jews and Christians.

Omar assigned the landed property of the Jews to the Mahometan warriors, and a strip of land near the town Kufa, on the Euphrates, was given them in return (about 640). But just as no evil in history is ever quite devoid of good consequences, the dominion of Islam furthered the elevation of Judaism from its deepest distress.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AGE OF THE GEONIM.

The Conquests of Islam—Omar's Intolerance—Condition of the Jews in Babylonia—Bostanaï—The Princes of the Captivity and the Geonim—Dignity and Revenues of the Prince—Communal Organisation—Excommunication—Julian of Toledo and the Jews—The Moslems in Spain—The Jews and Arabian Literature—The Assyrian Vocalisation—The Neo-hebraic Poetry: José ben José—Simon ben Kaïpha—Employment of Rhyme—Jannaï—Eleazar Kaliri—Opposition to the Study of the Talmud—The Jews in the Crimea and the Land of the Chazars—The False Messiah Obadia Abu-Isa—Solomon, the Prince of the Captivity.

640—760 C.E.

SCARCELY ten years after Mahomet's death the fairest lands in the north of Arabia and the north-west of Africa acknowledged the supremacy of the Arabs, who, with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, swept across the borders of Arabia with the cry: "There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is his prophet." Although there was no distinguished man at the head of the Arab troops, they yet conquered the world with far greater speed than the generals of Alexander of Macedon. The kingdom of Persia, weakened by old age and dissension, received the first blow, and the Byzantine provinces, which consisted of Palestine, Syria, and Egypt, whose inhabitants had but little sympathy with the intriguing court of Constantinople, did not offer the slightest resistance to the Arabs.

Medina, an oasis in the great desert, a spot unknown to the different nations, became the lawgiver for millions, just as Rome had been in olden times. No other choice remained to the various peoples

that had been conquered, but to recognise Mahomet as a prophet and be converted to Islam, or to pay tribute. The Emperor Heraclius had taken Palestine from the Persians only ten years before it was lost to the Byzantine kingdom. Jews and Samaritans both helped the Arabs to capture the land, in order that they might be freed from the heavy yoke of the malignant Byzantine rule. A Jew put into the hands of the Mussulmans the strongly-fortified town of Cæsarea, the political capital of the kingdom, which is said to have contained 700,000 fighting men, amongst whom were 20,000 Jews. He showed them a subterranean passage, which led the besiegers into the heart of the town. The Holy City, too, after a short siege, had to yield to the Mahometan arms. The second successor of Mahomet, the Caliph Omar, took personal possession of Jerusalem (about 638), and laid the foundation-stone of a mosque on the site of the Temple. The Bishop Sophronius, who had handed over the keys of Jerusalem to Omar, untaught by the change of fate which he had himself experienced, is said to have made arrangements with the Caliph, that the Jews under the capitulation should be forbidden to settle in the Holy City. It is true that Jerusalem was looked upon by the Mussulmans as a holy place, and pilgrimages were made there by them. It was also called the Holy City (Alkuds) by them, but it was to remain inaccessible to its sons. Omar is said to have driven out both Jews and Christians from Tiberias. Thus ceased the literary activity of the school of that place. They, however, again received permission to settle there under the succeeding Caliphs.

The rising Islam was as intolerant as Christianity. When Omar had driven the Jews out of Chaibar and the Christians out of Najaran, he gave instructions to his generals against the Jews and Christians. These orders were called "the Omar consti-

tutions," and contained many restrictions against the "peoples of the Book" (Jews and Christians). They were not allowed to build new synagogues, nor to restore those that were in ruins. They had to sing in subdued tones in the synagogues and churches, and were compelled to pray silently for the dead.

They dared not hinder their followers from accepting Islam, and were compelled to show marks of respect to Mussulmans whenever they met them. Further, they were not allowed to fill any office, nor could they obtain a verdict against a Mahometan. They were forbidden to ride on horses, and had to wear marks whereby they could easily be distinguished from the Moslems. Jews and Christians were not allowed to make use of a signet ring, which was considered as a mark of honour. Whilst the Mahometans were exempt from taxes, and at most had only to pay a slight contribution for the poor, Jews and Christians had to pay a poll-tax and ground rent.

In spite of this fact, the Jews felt themselves freer under the new rule of Islam than they did in the Christian lands. The restrictive laws of Omar were not carried out even during Omar's lifetime, and the fanatic Mussulmans rejected the Jews as co-religionists, though they did not despise them as citizens, but showed great honour to worthy Jews. The first Mahometans treated the Jews as their equals; they respected them as friends and allies, and took an interest in them even as enemies. The Asiatic and Egyptian Jews consequently treated the Mahometans as their liberators from the yoke of the Christians. A mystical Apocalypse makes a distinct reference to the joy experienced at the victory of Islam. Simeon bar Yochai, who was looked upon as a mystic, foretells the rise of Islam, and bewails the same in the prayer which runs as follows: "Have we not suffered enough

through the dominion of the wicked Edom (the Roman-Christian dominion), that the dominion of Ishmael should now rise over us?" Metatoron, one of the chief Angels, answers him: "Fear not, son of man! God only sets up the kingdom of Ishmael, in order that it may free you from the dominion of the wicked Edom. He raises up a prophet for them, he will conquer countries for them, and there will be great hatred between them and the sons of Esau" (the Christians). Such were the sentiments of the Jews during the conquests of the Mahometans.

The Jews in the ancient Babylonian district (called Irak by the Arabs) attained a great measure of freedom through the victories of the Mahometans. During their campaigns against the last Persian kings, the Jews and the Nestorian Christians had rendered them much assistance, because they had been persecuted under the last Sassanian princes. The Jews and the Chaldean Christians formed the bulk of the population near the Euphrates and the Tigris. Their assistance must have been opportune, as we find even the fanatical Caliph Omar bestowing rewards and privileges upon them. It was, doubtless, in consequence of the services which they had rendered that the Mahometan generals recognised the descendants of the Exilarch, viz., Bostanaï, as of the house of David, and the chief of the Jews. Omar respected Bostanaï so highly that he gave him a daughter of the Persian king Chosru in marriage. She had been taken prisoner, together with her sisters, in 642—a singular turn of fate! The grandson of a race that boasted descent from the house of David married a princess whose ancestors traced their descent from Darius, the founder of the Persian dynasty. Bostanaï was the first Exilarch who was appointed vassal by the Mahometans.

The Exilarch had both civil and political func-

tions, and several Jews of the Babylonian district formed a peculiar community under him. Bostanai also obtained the exceptional permission to wear a signet ring (Gushpanka). By this means he was able to give his documents and decrees an official character. The seal bore the impress of a fly, in reference to some unknown historical allusion. Bostanai must have been an important personage in other respects, since there is a tradition that he wished to assert his authority from his earliest childhood. The Judæo-Babylonian community, which had acquired some importance through Bostanai, obtained its real strength under the fourth Caliph, Ali, Mahomet's comrade and son-in-law, the hero of Chaibar.

Omar had died at the hands of an assassin (644), and his successor, Othman, had been killed in an insurrection (655). Ali was nominated Caliph by the conspirators, but had, however, to struggle against many bitter opponents. The kingdom of Islam was divided into two camps. The one declared for Ali, who resided in the newly-built town of Kufa; the other for Moawiyah, a relative of the murdered Caliph Othman.

The Babylonian Jews and Nestorian Christians sided with Ali, and rendered him their assistance. A Jew, Abdallah Ibn-Sabâ, was a spirited partizan of Ali. He asserted that the succession to the Caliphate was his by right, and that the divine spirit of Mahomet had passed to him, as it had from Moses to Joshua. It is said that at the census of the town of Firuz-Shabur or Anbar, there were on the side of Ali 90,000 Jews. At the head of these was Mar-Isaac, a head of a school. Their object was to do homage to the Caliph, who was but indifferently supported by his own followers (658). The unhappy Ali valued this homage, and, doubtless, accorded privileges to the Jewish head of the school. It is quite probable that

from this time the head of the school of Sora occupied a certain dignity, and took the title of Gaon. There were certain privileges connected with the Gaonate, upon which even the Exilarch—also politically appointed—did not venture to encroach. Through this there arose a peculiar relationship between the two entirely opposing offices—the Exilarchate and the Gaonate. This led to subsequent quarrels. With Bostanai and Mar-Isaac, the Jewish officials recognised by the Caliph, there begins a new period in Jewish history—the Epoch of the Geonim. After Bostanai's death there was a division in his house, a fact which throws no credit upon his sons. The cause of the dispute was the following: Bostanai had left several sons by various wives, one of whom was the son of the daughter of the Persian king. This one, perhaps, was his father's favourite, because royal blood flowed in his veins, and perhaps was probably destined by him for his successor. His brothers by the Jewish wives were consequently jealous of him, and treated him as a slave, *i.e.*, as one that had been born of a captive non-Jewess, and who, according to Talmudic law, was looked upon as a slave, so long as he could not furnish proof that either his mother or himself had been formally emancipated. This, however, had not taken place. The brothers then determined to sell the son by the king's daughter, their own brother, as a slave. However revolting this proceeding was, it was yet approved by several members of the Academy of Pumbeditha, partly from religious scruples, partly through the desire of rendering a friendly service to Bostanai's legitimate sons. Other authorities, however, upheld the contrary view, that they ought not to believe that Bostanai, who was a pious man, would have married the king's daughter before he had fully given her her freedom, and made her a proselyte. In order to protect her

son from humiliation, one of the chief judges, Channai, hastened to execute a document of emancipation for her, and thus the wicked design of the brothers was frustrated; but the stain of illegitimacy still attached to the son. His descendants were never admitted to the rank of the descendants of the Exilarch Bostanai.

Bostanai's descendants in the Exilarchate arbitrarily deposed the presidents of the schools, and nominated their own partizans in their places. The religious leaders of the people thus bore a grudge against Bostanai's descendants. Even in later times, an authority amongst the Jews had to assert himself with the words: "I am a member of the house of the Exilarch, but not a descendant of the sons of Bostanai, who were proud and oppressive." The vehement quarrels about the Caliphate, between the house of Ali and the Omiyyades, were repeated on a small scale in Jewish Babylonia. The half century from Bostanai and the rise of the Gaonate till the Exilarchate of Chasdai (670 to 730), is in consequence involved in obscurity. Little, too, is known of the Geonim who held office, and also of the heads of the schools during this period; and even the facts that we know are not in chronological order. After Mar-Isaac, probably the first Gaon of Sora, Hunai held office contemporaneously with Mar-Raba in Pumbaditha (670 to 680). Both of these heads of the schools made an important decree with respect to the law of divorce, whereby a Talmudical law was set aside. According to the Talmud, the wife can only seek for a divorce in very rare cases, *e.g.*, if the husband were suffering from an incurable disease. Even if the wife were seized with an unconquerable aversion to her husband, she could be compelled by law to live with him, and to fulfil her duties, on penalty of losing her marriage settlement, and even her dowry, in case she insisted upon the separation. Through the domination of

Islam circumstances were now changed. The Koran had somewhat raised the position of women, and empowered the wife to sue for a divorce. Through this, many unhappy wives appealed to the Mahometan courts, and compelled their husbands to give them divorce without the aforesaid penalties. It was in consequence of the events just related that Hunai and Mar-Raba introduced a complete reform of the marriage laws. They entirely abrogated the Talmudical law, and empowered the wife to sue for a divorce without suffering any loss of what was due to her. Thus the relation between husband and wife became more equalised. For the space of forty years (680 to 720), only the names of the Geonim and Exilarchs are known to us, historical details, however, are entirely wanting. During this time, through quarrels and concessions, there arose peculiar relations between the officials of the Jewish-Persian kingdom, which developed into a kind of constitution.

The Jewish community in Babylonia (Persia), which had the appearance of a state, had a peculiar constitution. The Exilarch was at their head, and next to him stood the Gaon. Both together, they formed the unity of the community. The Exilarch filled political functions. He represented the Babylonian-Persian Judaism under the Caliphs. He collected the taxes from the various communities, and paid them into the treasury. The Exilarchs, both in their outer appearance and mode of life, were like princes. They drove about in a state carriage; they had outriders and a kind of body guard, and received princely homage.

The religious unity of Judaism, on the other hand, was represented in the two chief schools of Sora and Pumbaditha. They expounded the Talmud, giving it a practical application; they made new laws and institutions, and saw that they were carried out, by allotting punishments for those who

transgressed them. The Exilarch shared the judicial power in common with the Gaon of Sora and the head of the school of Pumbaditha.

The relations of the Exilarch to the heads of the schools were as follows, viz., that the former had the right of nomination to offices, though not without the acquiescence of the college. The head of the school of Sora, however, was alone privileged to be styled "Gaon;" the head of the school of Pumbaditha did not bear the title officially. The Gaon of Sora enjoyed general preference over his colleague of Pumbaditha, partly through the remembrance of its great founders, Rab and Ashi, partly through its proximity to Kufa, the capital of Irak, and of the kingdom of Islam in the East. On festive occasions, the head of the school of Sora sat on the right side of the Exilarch. He obtained two-thirds of certain revenues for his school, and represented the Exilarch when the office was vacant. For a long time, too, only a member of the school of Sora was nominated president of the school of Pumbaditha, that school thus not being able to elect one from its own ranks.

Now that the Exilarch enjoyed princely respect everywhere, his successors were installed with a certain festive ceremony. Although the office was hereditary in the house of Bostanai, the acquiescence of both schools was required for the nomination of a new Exilarch, and thus there came to be a fixed installation service. The officials of both the schools, together with their colleagues, and the most respected men in the land, betook themselves to the residence of the designated Exilarch. In a large open place, which was lavishly adorned, seats were erected for him and the presidents of the two schools. The Gaon of Sora delivered an address to the future Exilarch, in which he was reminded of the duties of his high office, and

was warned against haughty conduct toward his brethren. The installation always took place in the synagogue, and on a Thursday. It consisted in both officials putting their hands upon his head, and declaring amidst the clang of trumpets, "Long live our lord the Prince of the Exile."

The people, who were always present in great numbers on the occasion, vociferously joined in. All present then accompanied the new Exilarch home from the synagogue, and presents flowed in from all sides. On the following Saturday evening there was a special festive service for the new prince. There was a pulpit in the shape of a tower erected for him in the synagogue. This was decked with costly ornaments, that he might appear like the kings of the house of David in the Temple on a raised seat, apart from the people. He was conducted to divine service by a numerous and honourable suite. The reader chanted the prayers, with the assistance of a well-appointed choir.

Led to the pulpit, the Gaon of Sora approached the Exilarch, bent his knee before him, and sat at his right hand. His colleague of Pumbaditha having made a similar obeisance, took his seat on the left. At the reading of the Law, they brought the scroll to the Exilarch, which was otherwise considered to be the privilege of the king. He was also the first one called up to the reading of the Law, which was only done on ordinary occasions to the descendants of the house of Aaron. In order to honour him, the president of the school of Sora acted as interpreter (Meturgeman), expounding the passage that had been read.

After reading the Law it was customary for the Prince of the Exile to deliver an address. But if the Exilarch were not learned enough, this might be done by the Gaon of Sora. In the final prayer for the glorification of God's name (Kadish, Gloria), the name of the Exilarch was mentioned: "May

this happen in the lifetime of the prince.” Thereupon followed a special blessing for him, the heads of the school and its members (Yekum Purkan), and the names of the countries, places and persons, far and near, that had advanced the welfare of the high schools by their contributions. A festive procession from the synagogue to the house or palace of the Exilarch, and a sumptuous repast to the officials and prominent personages, which often included state officers, formed the conclusion of this peculiar act of homage to the Exilarch.

Once a year, in the third week after the Feast of Tabernacles, a kind of court was held at the house of the Exilarch. The heads of the school, together with their colleagues, the presidents of the community, and many people besides, came to see him at Sora, probably with presents. On the following Sabbath the same ceremonial took place as at the nomination. Lectures were delivered during this court week, which was afterwards known as “the Great Assembly, or the Feast of the Exilarch.”

The Exilarch derived his income partly from certain districts and towns, and partly from extraordinary receipts. The districts Naharowan (east of Tigris), Farsistan, Holwan—as far as the jurisdiction of the Exilarch extended—even at the worst times, brought him an income of 700 golden denarii (£350). We can easily imagine how great his revenue must have been in the best times. The Exilarch also had the right of imposing a compulsory tax upon the communities under his jurisdiction, and the officials of the Caliph supported him in this because they themselves had an interest in it.

The president of the school of Sora was the second in rank in the Judæo-Babylonian community. He was the only one who held the title of Gaon officially, and he had the precedence over his colleague of Pumbaditha on all occasions, even

though the former were a young man and the latter an aged one. Meanwhile, the school of Pumbeditha enjoyed perfect equality and independence with respect to its constitution and affairs, except when one or another Exilarch, according to Oriental custom, made illegal encroachments upon the Gaon's power.

Next to the president came the chief judge, who discharged the judicial duties, and was, as a rule, the next in office. Below these were seven presidents of the Assembly of Teachers, and three others who bore the title of associate or scholar, and who seem to have composed the Inner Senate. Then came a college of a hundred members, which was divided into two unequal bodies, one of seventy members representing the "great Synhedrion," the other of thirty forming the "smaller Synhedrion." The seventy were ordained, and consequently qualified for promotion; they bore the title of teacher. The thirty or "smaller Synhedrion" do not seem to have been entitled to a seat and vote, but were simply candidates for the higher dignity. The members of the college generally bequeathed their offices to their sons, but the office of president was not hereditary.

This peculiarly-organised College of the two academies, however, lost by degrees its character of a scientific institution, and acquired that of a deliberating and decreeing Parliament. Twice a year, in March and September (Adar and Elul), the college held a general meeting, in accordance with ancient usage, and sat for a whole month. During this period the members occupied themselves with theoretical points, inasmuch as they discussed and explained some portion of the Talmud, which had been given out beforehand as the theme. But the principal attention of the meeting was directed to practical purposes. New laws and regulations were considered and decreed, and points

which had formed the subject of inquiry by foreign communities, during the preceding months, were discussed and answered by a declaration of the sense of the meeting. Little by little the replies to the numerous inquiries addressed to them by foreign communities on points of religion, morals, and civil law, came to occupy the greater part of the session. At the end of the session all opinions expressed by the meeting on the points submitted for their consideration were read over, signed by the principal, in the name of the whole college, confirmed with the seal of the academy (Chumrata), and forwarded by messenger to each community, with a ceremonious form of greeting from the college. It was customary for the various congregations to accompany their inquiries with valuable presents in money. If these presents were sent specially to one of the two academies, the other received no share; but if they were remitted without any precise directions, the Soranian school, being the more important, received two-thirds, and the remainder went to the sister-academy. These presents were divided by the president among the members of the college, and the students of the Talmud.

Over and above such extraordinary receipts, the two academies derived a regular income from the districts which fell under their jurisdiction. To Sora belonged the south of Irak, with the two important cities of Wasit and Bassora, and its jurisdiction extended as far as Ophir (India or Yemen?). In later times the revenues of these countries still amounted to 1,500 golden denars (about £750). The northern communities belonged to Pumbaditha, of which the jurisdiction extended as far as Chorasana.

The nomination of the judges of a district fell, in all probability, to the principal of the academy, in conjunction with the chief judge and

the seven members of the Inner Senate. Each of these three heads of the Babylonian-Jewish commonwealth accordingly possessed the power of appointing the judges of his province, and the communities were thus either under the Prince of the Captivity or the Soranian Gaonate, or were dependent on the academy of Pumbeditha. When a judge was appointed for a certain community he received a diploma from the authorities over him. If he bore the title of *Dayan*, he had to decide not only in civil but also in religious cases, and was therefore at the same time a *Rabbi*. He chose from amongst the members of the community two assessors (*Zekenim*), together with whom he formed a judicial and Rabbinical tribunal. All valid deeds, marriage contracts, letters of divorce, bills of exchange, bills of sale, and deeds of gift, were also confirmed by this *Rabbi-judge*. He was, at the same time, the notary of the community. For these various functions he received—first, a certain contribution from every independent member of the community; secondly, fees for drawing up deeds; and, thirdly, a weekly salary from the vendors of meat. The children's schools, which were in connection with the synagogue, were probably also under the supervision of this *Rabbi-judge*.

The communal constitution in Jewish Babylonia, which served as a model to the whole Jewish people, and partly maintained its ground until recent times, was on the following lines: At the head of the community was a commission entrusted with the public interests, and composed of seven members, who were called *Parnesé-ha-Keneset* (Maintainers of the Community). A delegate of the Prince of the Captivity, or of one of the principals of the academies, was charged with the supervision of public business, and also possessed the power of punishing refractory members. The

punishments inflicted were flogging and excommunication. This latter, the invisible weapon of the Middle Ages, which changed its victims to living corpses, was, however, neither so often nor so readily exercised by the Jews as by the Christians; but even then it fell with terrible force. Those who refused to comply with religious or official regulations, were punished with the lesser excommunication. It was mild in form, and did not entail a total withdrawal from the society of the person excommunicated, much less did it affect the members of his own family. But whosoever failed to repent within the given respite of thirty days, and to apply to have the excommunication annulled, incurred the punishment of the greater excommunication. This punishment scared away a man's most intimate friends, isolated him in the midst of society, and caused him to be treated as an outcast from Judaism. No one was allowed to hold social intercourse with him, under penalty of incurring similar punishments. His children were expelled from the schools, and his wife from the synagogue. All were forbidden to bury his dead, or even to receive his new-born son into the covenant of Abraham. Every distinctive mark of Judaism was torn from him, and he was left branded as one accursed of God. The proclamation of excommunication was posted up outside the Court of Justice and communicated to the congregation. Although this punishment of excommunication and its consequences were extremely horrible, it was nevertheless, at a time when the multitude was not open to conviction, the only means of preserving religious unity intact, of administering justice, and of maintaining social order.

The Jewish commonwealth of Babylonia, notwithstanding its dependence on the humours of an Islam governor and the caprice of its own supporters, seemed nevertheless to those at a distance

as though surrounded with a halo of power and greatness. The Prince of the Captivity appeared to all other Jews who had a slight knowledge concerning him to have regained the sceptre of David; for them the Gaons of the two academies were the living supports and the representatives of the ideal times of the Talmud. The further the dominion of the Caliphate of the house of Ommyyah was extended, to the north beyond the Oxus, to the east to India, in the west and the south to Africa and the Pyrenees, the more adherents were gained for the Babylonian Jewish chiefs. Every conquest of the Mahometan generals enlarged the boundaries of the dominion under the rule of the Prince of the Captivity and the Geonim. Even Palestine, which was now robbed of its centre, subordinated itself to Babylonia. The hearts of all Jews turned towards the possessors of power on the Euphrates, and their presents flowed in freely, to enable the house of David to make a worthy appearance, and the Talmudical academies to continue to exist in splendour. The pain arising out of their dispersion to all corners of the earth was mitigated by the knowledge that by the rivers of Babylon, where the flower of the Jewish nation in its full vigour had settled, and where the great Amoraim had lived and worked, a Jewish commonwealth still existed. It was universally believed by the Jews that in the original seat of Jewish greatness the primitive spring of ancient Jewish wisdom was still flowing. "God had permitted the academies of Sora and Pumbaditha to come into existence twelve years before the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and had vouchsafed them His special protection. They had never suffered persecution at the hands of the Romans or the Byzantines, and had known neither coercion nor bondage. From thence would proceed the deliverance of Israel, and the dwellers in this happy corner of

earth would be spared the sufferings that should usher in the age of the Messiah." Such was the view held by all who had not seen the Babylonian settlement with their own eyes.

It was accounted an honour for a dead person to be mentioned at a memorial ceremony of the academies. For this purpose a special day was set apart in each month of assembly, during which no business was transacted by the academies; the members mourned for those of the benefactors of the academies who had died during the past year, and prayed for the peace of their souls (*Ash-kabá*). Later on it became customary to forward lists of the dead, even from France and Spain, in order that they might also be thus honoured.

The Jews of Spain, to whom such a brilliant part is allotted in Jewish history, drained the cup of misery to the dregs, at the very time when their brethren in Irak obtained almost perfect freedom and independence. Some of them had been obliged to emigrate; others were compelled to embrace Christianity, and were required by the king *Chintila*, solemnly to declare in writing their sincere adhesion to the Catholic faith and their entire repudiation of Judaism. But although they had been forcibly converted, the Jews of Visigothic Spain nevertheless clung steadfastly to their prohibited religion. The independent Visigothic nobles protected them from the king's severity to a certain extent, and no sooner were the eyes of the fanatical *Chintila* closed in death than the Jews openly reverted to Judaism under *Chindaswinth*, his successor (642-652). This monarch was at open enmity with the clergy, who desired to restrain the power of the throne in favour of the Church, but, on the contrary, he was well affected towards the Jews.

His son, *Receswinth*, however, who was altogether unlike him, adopted an entirely different course of conduct. Either from fanaticism, or in

order to ingratiate himself with the clergy, at that time hostile to the throne, he proposed a council (which was at the same time a parliament) to deal rigorously with the Jews, more especially with such of them as had formerly feigned to be Christians. In his speech from the throne, Receswinth made the following appeal to the members of the council: "It is because I have learnt that my kingdom is polluted by them as by an epidemic that I denounce the life and the behaviour of the Jews. For while the Almighty has entirely freed the country from heresy, a disgraceful desecration of the churches still continues. This shall either be reformed by our piety or rooted out by our severity. I mean, that many of the Jews still persist in their old unbelief, while others, although purified by baptism, have relapsed so deeply into the errors of apostasy that their blasphemy seems even more abominable than the sin of those who have not been baptised. I adjure you, therefore, to decree against the Jews, without favour or respect of persons, some measure which shall be agreeable to God and to our faith." The council (the eighth) of Toledo, however, passed no new law against the Jews, but simply confirmed the canonical decisions of the fourth council of Toledo. The Jews were, it is true, allowed to remain in the country, but could neither possess slaves, nor hold any office, nor appear as witnesses against Christians. But far harder was the fate of those who, during the persecutions, had pretended to embrace Christianity. They were compelled to remain within the pale of the Church, and to abjure Judaism once again. Flight was impossible, for severe punishments were decreed against all who renounced Christianity, or hid themselves anywhere, or attempted to leave the country. Even the abettors of, or accessories to, the flight of converts, incurred heavy punishment. Those, however,

who desired to continue outwardly in their pretended faith, but who still clung to Judaism in their inmost hearts, were required to subscribe anew to a renunciation of their religion (*placitum Judæorum*).

On February 18th, 654, the Jews of the capital Toletum (Toledo) signed a declaration to king Receswinth of the following purport. They had already promised, it was true, under king Chintila, to remain steadfast to the Catholic faith, but their unbelief and the erroneous opinions which they had inherited from their fathers had prevented them from acknowledging Christ as their Master. Now, however, they voluntarily promised for themselves, their wives, and their children, that, for the future, they would not observe the rites and ceremonies of Judaism. They would no longer hold culpable intercourse with unconverted Jews, neither would they intermarry with near relations (children of brothers and sisters), nor take Jewish wives, nor observe Jewish marriage-customs, nor practise circumcision, nor keep the passover, the Sabbath, nor any other Jewish festivals; they would no longer observe the laws concerning food,—in a word, they would henceforward disregard the laws of the Jews and their abominable customs. On the other hand, they were honestly resigned to believe and profess a religion in conformity with the gospel and the apostolic traditions, and to observe the precepts of the Church without deceit or pretence. One thing, however, was impossible, that they should partake of pork; they were entirely unable to overcome their abhorrence of it. They promised, however, to partake freely of anything which might have been cooked with pork. Whoever among them should be guilty of a violation of this promise was to be put to death by fire or by stoning, either at the hands of other Jews or of his own sons. All of this they swore “by the Trinity.” It is probable that the compulsorily-converted Jews of the other

cities of the Visigothic-Spanish empire were obliged to give similar written assurances. At the same time they were still compelled to pay the tax levied on the Jews, for the Treasury could not afford to lose by their change of faith.

As king Receswinth was well aware, however, that the independent nobles of the country afforded the Jews their protection, and allowed such of them as had been compulsorily converted to live according to their convictions, he issued a decree forbidding all Christians, under penalty of excommunication and exclusion from the pale of the Church, to befriend the secret Jews. But these measures and precautions by no means accomplished the required end.

The secret Jews, or as they were officially termed the Judaising Christians, could not tear Judaism from their hearts. The Spanish Jews, surrounded as they were by perils of death, early learnt the art of remaining true in their inmost soul to their religion, and of wearying out their thousand-eyed foe. They continued to celebrate the Jewish festivals in their homes, and to disregard the holydays instituted by the Church. Desirous of putting an end to such a state of things, the representatives of the Church issued a decree, which aimed at depriving this unfortunate people of their home life; they were henceforward compelled to spend the Jewish and Christian holydays under the eyes of the clergy, in order that they might thereby be obliged to disregard the former and to observe the latter (655).

When, after a long reign, Receswinth died, the tormented Jewish converts took part in a revolt against his successor, Wamba (672—680). Count Hilderic, Governor of Septimania, a province of Spain, having refused to recognise the newly-elected king, raised the standard of revolt. In order to gain adherents and treasure he promised

the converted Jews a safe refuge and liberty of religion in his province, and they, taking advantage of the invitation, emigrated in numbers. The insurrection of Hilderic of Nismes soon acquired greater dimensions, and at first gave hopes of a successful issue, but the insurgents were eventually defeated. Wamba appeared with an army before Narbonne and expelled the Jews from this city. At the council which sat under him (the eleventh) the Jews did not form the subject of any legislation; they seem, on the contrary, to have enjoyed a certain amount of freedom during his reign, and to have made some efforts towards their self-preservation.

In order, on the one hand, to prove, that, although they were unable to reconcile themselves to Christianity, they were not entirely bereft of reason (as their enemies had declared at the councils and also in their writings); and, on the other hand, in order to keep their ancestral belief alive both in themselves and in such of their brethren as only partly belonged to the Christian faith, certain talented Jews set themselves to compose anti-Christian treatises, probably in Latin. One point alone is known of the arguments advanced in these polemical writings. The authors referred to a tradition relating that the Messiah would not appear before the seventh cycle of a thousand years, counting from the creation of the world; the first six cycles corresponded to the six days of the creation, and the seventh would be the universal Sabbath, the reign of the Messiah. But as according to their method of reckoning, hardly five thousand years had elapsed from the creation to the birth of Jesus, it was impossible, they maintained, that the Messiah could have already appeared. This objection must have been forcibly urged by the Jewish writers, for many Christians were thereby caused to waver in their faith.

This partial liberty of religion, thought, and speech, was suppressed by Wamba's successor, who gained possession of the throne by treacherous means. Erwig, who was of Byzantine origin, and who possessed to the full the deceitfulness and unscrupulousness of the degenerate Greeks, caused Wamba to assume the cowl, and proclaimed himself king. In order to get this usurpation recognised as lawful, Erwig found himself obliged to make some concession to the clergy, and accordingly he handed over the Jews to them as victims. He addressed with false pathos the council which was assembled to place the crown on his head, and in a fanatical speech submitted for confirmation a series of laws against the Jews. The portion of the royal speech which was directed against the Jews ran as follows: "With tears streaming from my eyes, I implore this honourable assembly to manifest its zeal and free the land from this plague of degeneracy. Arise, arise, I cry unto you; put to the test the laws against the apostasy of the Jews which we have just promulgated."

Of the seven-and-twenty paragraphs which Erwig submitted to the council for ratification, one alone related to the Jews; the rest were levelled at those compulsory converts who, despite their promises to persist in the Christian faith, and the severe punishment that followed in case of detection, were still unable to abandon Judaism. Erwig's edict made but short work of the Jews. They were commanded to offer themselves, their children, and all persons under their control, for baptism within the space of a year, otherwise their property would be confiscated, one hundred lashes would be inflicted on them, the skin torn off their head and forehead, to their everlasting shame, and they themselves chased out of the country. On the converted Jews, fresh hardships were imposed. They were now not only

obliged to spend the Christian and Jewish holy-days under the eyes of the clergy, but were further subjected to clerical control in all their movements. Whenever they set out upon a journey, they had to present themselves before the ecclesiastical authorities of the place, and obtain a certificate from them, setting forth the time they had lived there and attesting that their conduct had been scrupulously religious during that period. At the same time they were incapable of holding any office, and even of being appointed country judge (*villicus*, *actor*) over Christian slaves, excepting such of them as could bring forward evidence to prove that they had led a blameless, Christian life. They had always to carry about with them a copy of the laws which had been passed against them, so that they might never be able to plead ignorance in excuse. The ecclesiastical and royal judges were instructed to watch strictly over the execution of these orders, and all Christians were forbidden to accept any presents from converted Jews.

The council, at the head of which was Julian, the Metropolitan of Toledo, a man of Jewish descent, passed all Erwig's proposals, and enacted that these laws, as ratified by the decision of the synod, were by general acknowledgment inviolable for all time. Two days after the prorogation of this council, the Jews, both those who had remained true to their religion and those who had been converted, were called together, the laws were read out to them and their exact observance strictly enjoined (January 25th, 681). For a third time the converted Jews were compelled to abjure Judaism and to draw up a confession of faith—with the same sincerity, of course, as under Chintila and Receswinth.

But the Visigothic-Spanish Jews fared still worse under Erwig's successor, Egica. He did not drive them out of the country, it is true, but he did what was worse, he restricted their rights. He prohibited

the Jews and Judaising Christians from possessing landed property and houses; moreover, they were forbidden to repair to Africa, or to trade with that continent, or to transact business with any Christians whatever. They were compelled to surrender all their real estate to the Treasury, and were indemnified, probably not too liberally, for the same (693). Only those who were really converted were left unfettered by these restrictions.

The Jews were driven to despair by this new law, which it was impossible to evade, as their immovables were actually confiscated; they accordingly determined to make the perilous experiment of conspiring against their unrelenting foe. They entered into an alliance with their more fortunate brethren in Africa, with the intention of overthrowing the Visigothic empire, and were probably aided by the boldly-advancing Mahometans and the malcontent nobles of the country (694). The attempt might easily have succeeded, for the country was far advanced in a state of ruin and dissolution, owing to dissension, unnatural vices and weakness. But the conspiracy of the Jews was discovered before it was matured, and severe punishment was inflicted not only on the culprits, but also on the whole Jewish population of Spain, including the province of Septimania (together with Narbonne). They were all sentenced to slavery, presented to various masters, and distributed throughout the country, their owners being prohibited from setting them free again. The children of seven years of age and upwards were torn from their parents and given to Christians to be educated. The only exception made was in favour of the Jewish warriors of the narrow passes of the Gallican province, who formed a bulwark against invasion. They were indispensable, and their bravery protected them from

degradation and slavery, but even they were compelled to change their religion.

The Spanish Jews continued in this state of degradation until Egica's death. When his son Witiga followed him to the grave, the last hours of this empire were evidently at hand. The Jews of Africa, who at various times had emigrated thither from Spain, and their unlucky co-religionists of the Peninsula, made common cause with the Mahometan conqueror, Tarik, who brought over from Africa into Andalusia an army eager for the fray. After the battle of Xeres (July, 711), and the death of Roderic, the last of the Visigothic kings, the victorious Arabs pushed onwards, and were everywhere supported by the Jews. In every city that they conquered the Moslem generals were able to leave but a small garrison of their own troops, as they had need of every man for the subjection of the country; they therefore confided them to the safe-keeping of the Jews. In this manner the Jews, who but lately had been serfs, now became the masters of the towns of Cordova, Granada, Malaga, and many others. When Tarik appeared before the capital, Toledo, he found it occupied by a small garrison only, the nobles and clergy having found safety in flight. While the Christians were in church, praying for the safety of their country and religion, the Jews flung open the gates to the victorious Arabs (Palm-Sunday, 712), receiving them with acclamations, and thus avenged themselves for the many miseries which had fallen to their lot in the course of a century after the time of Reccared and Sisebut. The capital also was entrusted by Tarik to the custody of the Jews, while he pushed on in pursuit of the cowardly Visigoths, who had sought safety in flight, for the purpose of recovering from them the treasure which they had carried off.

Finally, when Muza Ibn-Nosair, the Governor of

Africa, brought a second army into Spain and conquered other cities, he also delivered them into the custody of the Jews. It was in these favourable circumstances that the Spanish Jews came under the rule of the Mahometans, as whose allies they esteemed themselves the equals of their co-religionists in Babylonia and Persia. They were kindly treated, obtained religious liberty, of which they had so long been deprived, were permitted to exercise jurisdiction over their co-religionists, and were only obliged, like the conquered Christians, to pay a poll-tax (*Dsimma*). Thus were they received into that great alliance, which, to a certain extent, united all the Jews of the Islamite empire in one commonwealth.

As the Mahometan Empire grew in size, the activity of its Jewish inhabitants increased in proportion. The first Caliphs of the house of Ommyyah, by reason of their continual wars with the descendants and comrades of Mahomet, with the fanatical upholders of the letter of the Koran, and with the partisans of the spiritual Imamate (high-priesthood), had become entirely free from that narrow-mindedness and mania for persecution which characterised the founder and the first two Caliphs. The following rulers of the Mahometans, Moawiyah, Yezid I., Abdul-Malik, Walid I., and Suliman (656—717) were far more worldly than spiritual; their political horizon was extensive, and they fettered themselves but little with the narrow precepts of the Koran and the traditions (*Sunna*). They loved Arabic poetry (Abdul Malik was himself a poet), held knowledge in esteem, and rewarded the author quite as liberally as the soldier who fought for them. The Jewish inhabitants of Mahometan countries soon adopted the Arabic language, both by reason of its relationship in many of its roots and forms with Hebrew, with which language all of them were more or less

acquainted, and on account of the need of it for business purposes. The enthusiasm which the Arabs felt for their language and poetry, the care which they took to keep them pure, even, and sonorous, also had their effect upon the Jews, and taught them to employ correct forms of speech. During the six hundred years which had elapsed since the fall of the Jewish nation, the Jews had lost the sense of beauty and grace of expression: they were negligent in their speech, careless of purity of form, and indifferent to the clothing of their thoughts and emotions in suitable terms. A people possessed of an imperfect delivery, using a medley of Hebrew, Chaldee, and corrupt Greek, was not in a position to create a literature, much less to enchain the wayward muse of poetry. But, as already mentioned, the Jews of Arabia formed an exception. They acquired from their neighbours a correct taste, and the art of framing their speech pleasantly and impressively. The Jewish races of Kainukaa and Nadhir, which had emigrated to Palestine and Syria, the Jews of Chaibar and Wadil-Kora, who had been transplanted to the region of Kufa and the centre of the Gaonate, brought with them to their new home this love and taste for the poetical Arab tongue, and gradually instilled them into their co-religionists. Hardly half a century after the occupation of Palestine and Persia by the Arabs, a Babylonian Jew was able to handle the Arabic language for literary purposes: the Jewish physician, Messer-Jawaih of Bassorah, translated a medical work from the Syriac into Arabic. Henceforward the Jews, like the Syrian Christians, were the channels through which scientific literature reached the Arabs.

The enthusiasm of the Arabs for their language and the Koran evoked also in the hearts of the Jews a similar sentiment for the Hebrew tongue and its holy records. Besides this, the Jews were

now stimulated to make closer acquaintance with the Scriptures, in order that they might not be put to the blush in their controversies with the Mahometans. If, until now, the talented men among them had turned their attention exclusively to the Talmud and the Agadic exposition, necessity at last compelled them to return to the source of the Bible.

As soon, however, as it was desired to recover what had been lost for centuries, and to return with ardour to the study of Biblical literature, a need manifested itself which had first to be supplied. In vocalising the Biblical text by the signs invented in Babylonia or in Tiberias, it was necessary to proceed in such passages as had not become familiar by frequent reading in public, according to grammatical rules. The Punctuators were obliged to be guided partly by tradition and partly by their sense of language. In this manner there arose the rudiments of two branches of knowledge: one treating of the above-mentioned rules of the Hebrew language, the other of the science of orthography, together with the exceptions as handed down by tradition (Massora). This apparently unimportant invention of adding certain strokes and points to the consonants, thus led to the comprehension of the Holy Scriptures by the general public and the initiation of a more general knowledge of Judaism. By its help, the holy language could now celebrate its revival; it would no longer be a dead idiom employed only by scholars, but could become a means of educating the people. The auxiliary signs tended to break down the barrier between the Learned (Chacham) and the Unlearned (Am-ha-Arez).

An immediate consequence of contact with the Arabs and the study of the Holy Writ was the birth of a neo-Hebraic poetry. Poetical natures naturally felt themselves impelled to arrange in connected speech and measured verse the wealth of

the Hebrew thought, in the same manner as the Arabs had done with theirs. But while the Arabic bards sang of the sword, of chivalry, of unbridled love, bewailed the loss of worldly possessions, and attacked with their satire such of their enemies as they could not reach with the sword, the newly-awakened Hebrew poetry knew of but one subject worthy of enthusiasm and adoration, God and his providence; of but one subject worthy of lament, the destitution and sorrows of the Jewish nation. The new-born Hebrew poetry, however different in form and matter from that of the Bible, had its religious foundation in common with it. The psalm of praise and the soul-afflicting dirge of lamentation were taken by the neo-Hebraic poets as their models. But a third element also claimed attention. Since the State had lost its independence learning had become the soul of Judaism; religious deeds, if not accompanied by knowledge of the Law, were accounted of no worth. The centre-point of the Sabbath and Festival services was the reading of a portion of the Law and the Prophets, the interpretation thereof by the Targumists and the explanation of the text by the Agadists (Homilists). The neo-Hebraic poetry, if it was intended to reach the hearts of the people, could not be entirely devoid of an instructive element. The poet had no other scene of action than the synagogue, no other audience than the congregation assembled for prayer and instruction, and his poetry therefore necessarily assumed a synagogal or liturgical character.

The poetical impulse was strengthened by practical necessity. The original divine service with its short and simple prayers was no longer sufficient. It was extended, it is true, by the recitation of psalms and appropriate liturgical compositions, but even this did not fill up the time which the congregation would gladly have spent in the house of

God. This was especially felt on the days of the New Year's Festival and of the Atonement, which were dedicated to deep devotion, and during the greater part of which the congregation remained in the house of prayer, contrite, and imploring forgiveness and redemption. It was evident that the divine service must be amplified, and more matter for meditation provided. In this manner arose the synagogal, or poetanic composition as it was also called. At the head of this series of neo-Hebraic poets stands José bar José Hayathom (or Haithom), whose works are not without a true poetic ring, although devoid of artistic form. The date and nationality of this poet are entirely unknown, but it appears probable that he was a native of Palestine, and that he lived not earlier than the first Gaonic century.

José b. José took as the subject of his poems the emotions and memories which move a Jewish congregation on the New Year's Day. On this occasion, the birthday of a new division of time, when, according to Jewish ideas, the destiny that the year just commenced has in store for each individual person and the whole community is decided, God is extolled in a sublime poem as the mighty Master, the Creator of the world, the just Judge and the Redeemer of Israel. This poem, which was attached to the old prayers for the prescribed blowing of the cornet, and was intended to interpret them, embraces in a small compass the story of Israel's glorious past, its oppressed present, and promised future. José's poem is at once a psalm of triumph and of lamentation, interwoven with penitential prayers and words of hope. The resurrection is described in a few striking, picturesque lines.

Another and longer of José's poems has for its theme the ancient worship in the Temple on the day of Atonement, which the attentive nation used to follow in devotional mood, and the realis-

ation of which in language was well calculated to awaken the great memories of the glorious times of national independence (Abodah). It is a sort of liturgical epic, which describes evenly, and without any lyrical strain the creation of the universe and of man, the ungodliness of the first generation, Abraham's recognition of God, the election of his posterity as God's peculiar people, and the calling of Aaron's family to the service of the Temple. Arrived at the priesthood of Aaron, the poet goes on to describe the duties of the high priest in the Temple on the day of Atonement, following the account of the Mishna, and concludes with the moment when the high priest, accompanied by the whole nation, joyful and assured by visible signs of forgiveness, adjourns from the Temple to his home,—a beautiful fragment of the past, always certain to awake a powerful echo in the hearts of the Jewish people.

Elevation of thought and beauty of language form the characteristics of José b. José's poetry. His New Year's sonnets and Temple epics have become constituent parts of the Divine service of certain congregations, and have served as models for others. His verses are unrhymed and without metre, a proof of their great antiquity. The only artificial feature of his poetical works is the alphabetical or acrostic commencement of the verses, an arrangement for which several of the Psalms, Jeremiah's Lamentations, and the post-talmudical prayers served him as models. In the first fruits of the new Hebraic poetry form is completely subservient to matter. There has been preserved from ancient times another Abodah, ascribed to a poet of the name of Simon ben Caipha. It appears to have been written in imitation of that of José b. José, but leaves its model far behind it, and was honoured by being adopted by the synagogue of the Gaonate. To the name of Simon Caipha, which

sounds like the Jewish name of the apostle Peter, a peculiar legend is attached : The apostle, on whom rests the foundation of the Catholic Church, is represented as having written this Abodah in order to declare in the opening part his truly Jewish acknowledgment of God's unity, and to revoke his adhesion to Jesus, as if the disciple who three times denied his Master had desired in this liturgical poem to attest his unbelief.

It was impossible that the Jewish liturgical poetry could long remain satisfied with this simplicity of form. Little by little the Jews became acquainted with the poetry of the Arabs, the agreeable sound of its rhymes captivated them, and they were led to regard rhyme as the perfection of poetry. The poetanists were therefore obliged, if they would be well received, to adopt this artistic device, and this was the barrier which stopped their further progress. As far as is known, the first poet who introduced rhyme into the neo-Hebraic poetry was one Jannai, probably an inhabitant of Palestine. He composed versified prayers for those special sabbaths which, either by reason of historical memories, or on account of their being a time of preparation for the approaching festivals, were possessed of particular importance. The Agadic discourses, which had been introduced on these sabbaths, do not seem to have pleased the congregations any longer, owing to the inability of the preachers to find new and attractive matter ; they seem, indeed, to have read out the same discourses in a given order from year's end to year's end.

The poems of Jannai and his comrades aimed at giving the substance of these Agadic expositions in the form of agreeable verse. Hence, Jannai's productions are versified Agadas. But as he was not poet enough to reproduce the true and striking parts of the Agadic literature, as his rhymes were

heavy and laboured, and as he also burdened himself with the task of commencing his verses with consecutive letters of the alphabet, and of interweaving his name into them, his poems are dull, clumsy, and unwieldy.

Altogether the neo-Hebraic poetry gained nothing during its earliest years by the introduction of rhyme. Eleazar ben Kalir or Kaliri (of Kiriath-Sepher), one of the first and most prolific of the poetanic writers, and a disciple of Jannai, was just as clumsy and heavy as his master. His style and his work was even more obscure. He wrote over 150 liturgical pieces, including hymns for the festivals, penitential prayers for the holy-days, songs of lamentation for the principal fasts, and various other compositions which cannot be classed under distinct heads. Kaliri versified with great minuteness a large portion of the Agadic literature, but only a few of his compositions have any poetical value, and none possess beauty. In order to overcome the difficulties which were presented by the allusions to the Agada, rhyme, alphabetically arranged initial words and the interweaving of his name, Kaliri was obliged to do violence to the Hebrew language, to set at defiance the fixed rules which govern the use of words, and to create unprecedented combinations. In place of pictures drawn in words he often presents to his reader obscure riddles which it is impossible to solve without a thorough acquaintance with the Agadic writings. Nevertheless, Kaliri's poetic compositions made their way into the liturgies of the Babylonian, Italian, German, and French Jews; the Spaniards alone, guided by some delicate feeling for language, refused to adopt them. Kaliri was honoured as the greatest of the poetanic writers, and tradition has glorified his name.

By the introduction of these compositions the liturgy acquired an altered character. The transla-

tion of the portions of the Law which were read out to the congregation, and the Agadic expositions thereof, which had now become unfamiliar to the multitude, as the Jews of the Islamic empire adopted the Arabic language, gradually disappeared from the divine service, and their places were filled up by metrical compositions (*Piyutim*) which answered the same purpose, and at the same time possessed the advantage of a poetical character. By this means a considerable extension was given to the divine service. The reader supplanted the preacher. Singing was introduced into the synagogue, as the poetical prayers were not recited, but sung (*Chazanut*). Special tunes were introduced for the various prayers. But the poetanic compositions were not adopted by all congregations as part of their divine service. The Talmudical authorities were at first opposed to their adoption for the reason that they were usually interpolated between the various divisions of the principal prayer, and in this manner destroyed the continuity and coherence of its separate parts.

The return to the source of the Bible had the result of kindling a poetic flame in artistic natures; but, at the same time, it fanned into existence a wild spirit which at first brought trouble, schism, and malediction in its train, although afterwards it became a source of purification, vigour, and blessing to the Jews. The origin of this movement, which divided the Jewish commonwealth of the east and west into two camps, dates from the first Gaonic century.

The Babylonian Talmud held sway over the Jewish community in Babylonia; it was not only a code, but also the reviving influence for the community of which the Prince of the Captivity and the two presidents of the Talmudical Academies were dignitaries. By the expansion of the Islamic dominion from India to Spain,

from the Caucasus deep down into Africa, the authority of the Talmud was extended far beyond its original bounds; for the most distant congregations placed themselves in communication with the Gaonate, submitted points of religion, morals, and civil law to them for advice, and accepted in full faith their decisions, grounded as they were on the Talmud. The Babylonian-Persian communities felt themselves in no wise hampered by the Talmudical ordinances, which were of their own creation, and had sprung up in their midst, the outcome of their views, morals, and customs, the work of their authorities. The African and European communities were too unlearned in the Bible and the Talmud to be able to express an opinion on the matter. They took the decisions of the Geonim as their standard, without greatly troubling themselves as to the question of their agreement with, or contradiction of, the Bible.

Quite otherwise was it, however, with the Arabian Jews who had emigrated from Arabia to Palestine, Syria and Irak, the Benu-Kainukaa, the Benu-Nadhir, and the Chaibarites. They were sons of the desert, men of the sword, soldiers and warriors, accustomed from their childhood to a free life and to the development of their strength; men who cultivated social intercourse with their former Arabic allies and fellow-soldiers, in whose midst they again settled after the conquest of Persia and Syria. Judaism was indeed dear to them, for they had sacrificed liberty, country, fame and wealth in its cause, and had resisted Mahomet's importunities, and not allowed themselves to be converted to Islamism. But between the Judaism which they practised in Arabia, and the Judaism taught by the Talmud and set up for a standard by the academies, there lay a deep gulf. To conform to Talmudical precepts they ought to have renounced their genial familiarity with their former comrades, and to have

given up their drinking bouts with the Arabs (which, despite their interdiction by the Koran, these latter greatly loved); in a word, they felt themselves hampered by the Talmud.

The Jews from Arabia, who came chiefly into contact with the Mahometans, and were, therefore, frequently involved in controversy as to whether Judaism was still possessed of lasting authority or had been abrogated by Islamism, were obliged, so as not to be at a loss for an answer, to make themselves well acquainted with the Bible. They thereupon probably discovered that much of what the Talmud and the academies declared to be religious precept, was not confirmed by the Bible. But from whatever cause this aversion to Talmudical precepts may have arisen, it is certain that it first had its origin in the Arabian Jewish colony in Syria or Irak. It is related by a thoroughly substantiated source, that during the first part of the eighth century many Jews allowed themselves to be persuaded to abandon Talmudical Judaism and to conform only to the prescriptions of the Bible.

The leader of this movement was a Syrian, Serene (Serenus) by name, who gave himself out as the Messiah (about 720). He promised the Jews to put them in possession of the Holy Land again, which naturally implied the previous expulsion of the Mahometans. This attempt to regain their long-lost independence was perhaps occasioned by the fanatical Caliph Omar II. (717-720). That bigoted prince, who had been raised to the throne by the intrigues of a zealous reader of the Koran, had re-enacted the restrictive laws of his predecessor Omar I. (the covenant of Omar), which had fallen into oblivion under the politic Ommyyads. After his accession to the throne he wrote to his governors as follows: "Do not pull down a single church or synagogue, but do not allow new ones to be built within your provinces." Omar de-

voted himself to making proselytes, holding out attractive promises to the new converts, and unceremoniously compelled both Jews and Christians to embrace Islamism. It was probably for this reason that the Jews were disposed to give their adhesion to the false Messiah, and to lend credence to his representation that he would make them free again in the land of their fathers and exterminate their enemies. Upon his banner Serene inscribed the release of the Jews from the Talmudical ordinances; he abolished the second days of the festivals, the prescribed forms of prayer, and the laws of the Talmud relating to food: he permitted the use of wine obtained from non-Jews, and sanctioned marriage between persons of nearer relationship than was allowed by the Talmud, as also celebration of marriages without a marriage-contract. It is probable that this hostility towards the Talmud gained him many adherents.

Serene's fame having spread as far as Spain, the Jews of that country resolved to abandon their property and to place themselves under the leadership of the pseudo-Messiah. Hardly ten years after the Jews of Spain had been delivered from the yoke of the Visigoths by the conquests of the Mahometans, they, or at least many of them, were desirous of again abandoning their newly-acquired fatherland. It appears that they were dissatisfied with the rule and administration of the Mahometan governors. As they had rendered signal services to the Arabs in the conquest of the peninsula, they probably expected particular consideration and distinction, and instead of this they were impoverished equally with the Christians. Serene's fate was a miserable one, as he indeed deserved. He was captured and brought before the Caliph Yezid, Omar II.'s successor, who put an end to his Messianic pretensions, by propounding insidious questions to him which he was unable to answer.

Serene is said, however, to have denied before the Caliph that he had had any serious designs, but that he only intended to have a joke at the expense of the Jews; whereupon the Caliph handed him over to the Jews for punishment. Many of his adherents, repenting of their easy credulity, were desirous of again joining the communities from which they had severed themselves by infringement of the Talmudical ordinances. The Syrian communities were doubtful, however, as to whether and how they ought to re-admit their repentant brethren into their midst, or whether they ought not to be treated as proselytes. They referred the matter, therefore, to Natronai ben Nehemiah, surnamed Mar-Yanka, the principal of the Pumbaditha academy, and successor of Mar-Rabya (719-730). Natronai's decision concerning the reception of Serene's adherents was conceived in a liberal spirit, and ran as follows: According to the laws of the Talmud, there was nothing to prevent them from being re-admitted by the communities, and being treated as Jews; but they were to declare openly in the Synagogues their sorrow and repentance, and to promise that their future conduct should be pious and in accordance with the precepts of the Talmud, and in addition they were to suffer the punishment of flogging. At that time there also existed other apostates, who went so far as to disregard the Biblical prescriptions concerning the Sabbath, the ritual for slaughtering cattle, the eating of blood, and the intermarrying of near relations. It is not known, however, in what country the home of these persons was situated. Without declaring either for Christianity or Islamism, they entirely severed their connection with Judaism.

About this time the Jews of the Byzantine empire were subjected to severe persecution, from the effects of which they did not recover for a long time, and this, too, from a monarch of whom they

had least expected hostile treatment. Leo, the Isaurian, the son of rude peasant parents, having had his attention drawn by the Jews and the Arabs to the idolatry of the image-worship which obtained in the churches, had undertaken a campaign with the intention of destroying these images. Being denounced, however, to the uncultivated mob by the image-worshipping clergy as a heretic and a Jew, Leo proceeded to vindicate his orthodoxy by persecuting the heretics and the Jews. He issued a decree commanding all the Jews of the Byzantine Empire and the rest of the Montanists in Asia Minor to embrace the Christianity of the Greek Church, under pain of severe punishment. (723). Many Jews submitted to this decree, and received baptism, although unwillingly; they were thus less steadfast than the Montanists who, in order to remain faithful to their convictions, assembled in their house of prayer and burnt themselves to death. Such of the Jews as had allowed themselves to be baptised, were of opinion that the storm would soon blow over and that they would be permitted to revert to Judaism. It was, therefore, only in appearance that they embraced Christianity; for they observed the Jewish rites in secret, thereby drawing upon themselves fresh persecutions. Thus the Jews of the Byzantine Empire pined away in unceasing distress, and for a time they are hidden from the view of history.

Many Jews of the Byzantine empire, however, escaped compulsory baptism by emigration. They quitted a country in which their forefathers had settled long before the rise of that church which had so persistently persecuted them. The Jews of Asia Minor chose as their home the neighbouring Cimmerian or Tauric peninsula (the Crimea), whose uncivilised inhabitants, of Scythian, Finnish and Slavonian origin followed idolatry. These Alani, Bulgarians and Chazars were not jealous when men

of other race and of a different belief settled in their vicinity. Thus, side by side with the Jewish communities which had existed from early times, there arose new communities on the shores of the Black Sea and the Straits of Theodosia (Kaffa), inland in Sulchat, Solgat, now Eski-Crimea, in Phanagoria, now Taman, and on the Bosphorus (Kertch), which lies opposite. From the Crimea the Grecian Jews spread towards the Caucasus, and the hospitable countries of the Chazars on the west coast of the Caspian Sea and at the mouth of the Volga (Atel). Jewish communities settled in Berdaa (Derbend), at the Alanian Gates, in Semender (Taki), and, finally, in Balanjiar, the capital of the land of the Chazars. By their energy, ability and intelligence, the Grecian Jewish emigrants speedily acquired power in the midst of these barbaric nations, and prepared the way for an important historical event.

Hardly thirty years after the fall of the false Messiah Serene, an anti-Talmudical movement, coupled with messianic enthusiasm, was again set on foot, but this time on a different scene. The prime mover was a fantastic and warlike inhabitant of the Persian town of Ispahan, one Obaiah Abu-Isa ben Ishak. He was not an ignorant man, but understood the Bible and the Talmud, and was capable of expressing his thoughts in writing. It is said that he was made aware of his call to an exalted vocation by a sudden cure from leprosy. Abu-Isa did not proclaim himself as the Messiah, but asserted that he was the forerunner and awakener (Dai), to prepare for the Messiah's coming. His views concerning the office of precursor of the Messiah were indeed altogether peculiar. He taught that five forerunners would precede the Messiah, and that each one would be more perfect than his predecessor. He considered himself as the last and most perfect of the five, and of equal

merit with the Messiah. He assumed his vocation in good earnest, and announced that God had called him to free the Jewish race from the yoke of the nations and of unjust rulers.

The messianic precursor of Ispahan found many partisans, 10,000 Jews, it is said, gathering round him for the purpose of aiding him in his task of deliverance. To them Abu-Isa expounded a form of Judaism differing in some respects from the normal religion; the points of difference, however, are not known. He entirely abolished divorce, even in the case of adultery. He augmented the three daily periods for prayer by four new periods, citing in support of this innovation the verse of a psalm: "Seven times a day do I praise thee." Abu-Isa retained the forms of prayer as perscribed by the Talmud, and in no way disturbed the existing order of the calendar. He explained his own peculiar system of religion in one of his works, in which he prohibits the use of meat and wine by his followers but pronounces the abrogation of sacrificial worship.

Abu-Isa desired to carry through his messianic task of liberation sword in hand, and accordingly made soldiers of his followers, and rode at their head like a general. There could have been no more favourable moment for an attempt to regain liberty by open force. In all the provinces of the Mahometan empire the spirit of rebellion against Mervan II., the last Caliph of the Ommyyad dynasty, was aroused. Ambitious governors, dissatisfied partisans, the Abassides, who laid claim to the supreme power, all these antagonistic elements conspired to overthrow the house of Ommyyah, and turned the wide dominions of the empire into a battlefield of fierce passions. During this period of rebellion, Isa-Abu and his band seem to have begun their work of deliverance in the neighbourhood of Ispahan. They probably strengthened their posi-

tion during the subsequent disturbances consequent upon the severe defeat sustained by Mervan's general on the Euphrates (at Kerbella, August, 749).

Abu-Isa fell in battle; his followers dispersed, and the Jews of Ispahan had to expiate his revolt. His adherents, however, loyally preserved his memory; under the name of Isavites or Ispahanites they continued to exist until the tenth century, forming the first religious sect to which Judaism had given rise since the fall of the Jewish state. The Isavites lived in accordance with their master's teaching, observing some points of Talmudical Judaism while disregarding many others.

During this time, however, no extraordinary movement occurred in the centre of Jewish religious life; everything continued on the old lines, the principals of the academies and the Geonim succeeded each other without leaving any perceptible traces behind them. They had no suspicion that a new spirit was abroad in Judaism which would shake it to its very foundations.

CHAPTER V.

RISE OF KARAISM AND ITS RESULTS.

Anan ben David, the founder of Karaism—His life, writings, and influence—Hostility to the Talmud—Anan's innovations—Karaite reverence of Anan—The Exilarchate becomes elective—Adoption of Judaism by the Chazars—King Bulan and Isaac Sinjari—Bulan's Jewish successors—Charlemagne and the Empire of the Franks—The Jews and Commerce—Jewish Envoy sent to the Caliph Haroun Alrashid—Spread of the Jews in Europe—The Caliphs and the Jews—The study of philosophy—Sahal—The Kalam—Mutazilists and Anthropomorphists—Judah Judghan—The *Shiur Komah*—The Akbarites—Moses the Persian.

761—840 C.E.

It is as little possible for an historical event to be evolved, as for a natural birth to occur, without labour. For a new historical phenomenon to struggle into existence, the comfortable aspect of things must be destroyed, indolent repose in cherished custom disturbed, and the power of habit broken. This inexorable upsetting of existing things, although at first painful, is eventually favourable to them, provided the new creatures are healthy and possessed of vitality; for thereby all vagueness is dissipated, all semblances destroyed, and the dim, unseen reality brought more clearly to light. Opposition, the salt of history, which prevents corruption, had been wanting in Jewish history for several centuries, and religious life had been moulded into set forms and had there become petrified. Pauline and post-apostolic Christianity, supplied, in its day, just the opposition required. It abrogated the standard-giving law, abolished knowledge and substituted faith in its place, and thus produced in the evolution of Judaism

a disposition to cling firmly to the Law, and to develop a system of religious teachings which should deal with the minutest details. The Talmud resulted from this movement of opposition ; it was the sole prevailing authority in Judaism, and succeeded in supplanting the Bible in the estimation of the people. Even the study of the Talmud, which had possessed a refreshing and enlightening influence in the time of the Amoraim had degenerated in the following century and in the first Gaonic period into a mere matter of memory, entirely devoid of any faculty of intellectual fructification. A free current of air was wanting to clear the heavy atmosphere. Opposition to the Talmud, the pass-word of the two heralders of the Messiah, Serene and Abu-Isa, had left no lasting remembrance behind, partly because the movement accompanied by fanatical agitation in favour of a pretended Messiah led to no other result than the undeceiving of its partisans, and partly because it had been set on foot by obscure persons, possessed of neither importance nor authority. If this one-sidedness was to be overcome, if the Bible was to be reinstated in its rights, and religious life to regain its spirituality, it was necessary that the opposing tendency, which up till then had only been manifested in narrow circles, should be imparted by some moderate reformer invested with an official character, to a more extended public. Until this movement proceeded, not from some out-of-the-way corner, but from the region which at that time formed the centre of Jewish life, it was impossible for it to be taken up by the multitude or to produce any regenerative effects. The required agitation was set on foot by a son of the Prince of the Captivity of the house of Bostanai, and produced lasting effects.

It appears that the Exilarch Solomon had died (761-2) without issue, and that the office ought to have been conferred on his nephew Anan ben David.

The biography of this man, who exercised such a profound influence upon Jewish history, and whose adherents continue to exist at the present day, is quite unknown, and the facts have been entirely distorted, a result of the schism which occurred later on. While his disciples honour him as a pious and holy man, who, "if he had lived at the time when the Temple was still standing, would have been vouchsafed the gift of prophecy," his opponents cannot sufficiently disparage him. But even they admit that Anan was exceedingly well read in the Talmud, and that he employed its style with great ability. It is also certain that the son of the Exilarch held that certain decisions of the Talmud possessed no religious authority, and that his anti-Talmudical tendency must have been known, at all events, to the representatives of the two academies, who directed the election of the Exilarch. The Gaonic office was at that time held by two brothers, sons of Nachman: that of Sora by Judah the Blind (759-62), and that of Pumbaditha by Dudai (761-64). These two brothers united with their colleges to prevent Anan from succeeding to the dignity of Exilarch, and to choose in his stead his younger brother Chananya (or Achunai). But Anan did not stand entirely alone; like others of elevated rank he had friends. His expectation of an authority, whose sway was acknowledged by at least all the Jewish communities of the East, had doubtless attracted many ambitious, greedy and parasitical followers. But he also possessed adherents among those who refused more or less openly to regard the Judaism of the Talmud as true Judaism, and who welcomed Anan as a powerful champion. The Ananite party were not sparing in their efforts to obtain the nomination of their chief by the Caliph Abu Jafar Almansur, who they supposed was favourably disposed towards them; but their opponents gained the day.

They are said to have attempted the life of that chief and to have accused him of planning a rebellion against the Caliph, who thereupon threw him into prison, where, the legend goes on to relate, a Mahometan was incarcerated. Both of them were to have been hanged, but Anan's companion in misfortune is asserted to have advised him to explain to the Caliph, that he did not belong to the same sect as his brother Chananya. Thereupon Almansur is said to have liberated him—because he regarded Anan with kindness, say the adherents of the latter; according to his adversaries, in consequence of handsome presents of money—and permitted him to emigrate with his followers to Palestine.

One thing only is certain among all these doubtful statements, namely, that Anan was obliged to leave his country, and that he settled in Palestine. He built his own synagogue in Jerusalem, and it was still standing at the time of the first crusade. It is likewise certain that, in consequence of the mortifying slight cast upon him by the Gaons, Anan became hostile to the Gaonate, and transferred all his animosity to the Talmud, the principal source of their importance. He displayed, in fact, a fierce hostility to the Talmud and its supporters. He is reported to have said that he wished all the adherents of the Talmud were in his body, so that by killing himself he might make away with them at the same time. He considered everything in the Talmud reprehensible, and was desirous of returning to the Bible for the ordering of religious life. He reproached the Talmudists with having corrupted Judaism, and accused them at the same time not only of adding many things to the Torah, but also of disregarding many of its commandments, which they declared to be no longer obligatory. Many things which, according to the text of the Bible, ought to have been binding for

all time they set aside. The advice which he impressed on his followers was “to seek industriously in the Scripture.” On account of this return to the letter of the Bible (Mikra) the system of religion which Anan founded received the name of the Religion of the Text, or Karaism.

Anan expounded his views concerning religious commandments and prohibitions in three works; one of which was a commentary on the Pentateuch, certainly the very first of all productions of this class. Anan's works have not survived the course of time; the original character of Karaism is thus enveloped in complete obscurity. This much only is clear, that in his hostility to the Talmud the founder of the Karaite sect increased rather than lessened the religious duties of life, enforced many observances which time and custom had long abolished, and in his blind eagerness to change the Talmudical exposition of the Law, often fell into ridiculous exaggerations. He made use of the Talmudical or more properly the Mishnaic rules of interpretation, and with their help he considered himself fully as well entitled as the old teachers (of the Mishna) to deduce new laws of religion. The most important alterations were those effected in the laws concerning the times of the festivals, the Sabbath, marriage and food. Anan abolished the fixed calendar, which had been established in the middle of the fourth century; but finding no grounds in the Bible for this innovation, he was obliged to refer back to the time of the Second Temple and the Tanaites. As in former times, the beginning of every month was to be fixed by observation of the new moon. The leap years were not to follow in a regular series according to the nineteen-years' cycle, but were to be determined by repeated examination of the condition of the crops, especially at the time of the ripening of the barley. This was not so much an

absolute innovation as a renewal of a method of regulating the festivals, the untenableness of which was evident in the state of dispersion of the Jewish nation. This variability of the calendar offered but little difficulty to Anan and his followers in Palestine; but it proves that he was possessed of but little regard for the future. As had been formerly done by the Sadducees, Anan placed the feast of Pentecost fifty days from the Sabbath after Passover.

In the strict observation of the Sabbath, Anan left the Talmud very far behind. He pronounced it unlawful to administer any medicines on the Sabbath, even in the case of dangerous illness, or to perform the operation of circumcision, or to leave the house in those cities where the Jews did not live separate from the non-Jewish population; he did not allow any warm food to be eaten, nor even a light or fire to be kindled on the eve of the Sabbath by the Jews themselves, or for their use on the Sabbath evening. Anan introduced the custom among the Karaites of spending the Sabbath eve in entire darkness. All these alterations and many others he pretended to deduce from the letter of the Bible. He made the laws relating to food severe beyond all measure, and he extended the prohibition of marriage to relatives who, according to the Talmud, were allowed to intermarry, so that the marriage of uncle and niece and of half-brothers and sisters, who were absolutely unrelated to one another, was regarded by him as an incest. Of what importance, compared with this exaggerated severity, was the abolition of the phylacteries (Tephillin), of the bundles of plants at the Feast of Tabernacles, and of the festival of Dedication instituted in remembrance of the time of the Hasmoneans, and other trifles? As his opponents rightly affirmed, he set up a new and much stricter Talmud. Religious life was thus

invested by Anan on the one hand with gloom, on the other with an insipid and unpoetical character. The forms of prayer, which had been employed during many centuries, and some of which had even been in use in the Temple, were forbidden by the founder of this sect to be used in the Synagogue, and they were banished, together with the prayers of the poetanim. He directed that certain portions of the Bible, tastelessly arranged in the form of a litany, should be read out in the Karaite Synagogues. As the Jews of the Islamic empire were possessed of their own jurisdiction, Anan's innovations dealt also with points of civil law. In opposition to the text of the Bible, he placed the female heirs on an equal footing with the males with reference to their parents' heritage, while on the other hand he refused the husband the right of succeeding to the property of his deceased wife.

But although Anan gave great impetus to the study of the Bible—the system of vocalisation having been already introduced, thus enabling all men to read the Scriptures—nevertheless the age in which he lived was neither ripe enough nor his mind sufficiently comprehensive, to enable him to produce a healthy, independent explanation of the text. He himself was obliged, in order to establish his innovations, to have recourse to forced interpretations, such as would hardly have been proposed by the Talmudists whom he reviled. In rejecting the Talmud, he broke the bridge connecting the biblical past with the present. The religion of the Karaites is thus no natural growth, but an entirely artificial and laboured creation. Anan had no regard for the customs and sentiments of the people. As he was obliged to found and build up his system of religion on the interpretation of the Scripture, Karaism naturally acquired an unsettled character.

A new explanation of the text might threaten the very foundations of religious life, for what was lawful might become unlawful, and *vice versâ*. Anan was as devoid of the power of appreciating poetry as of understanding history. The sacred prophetic and poetic literature were of no further use to him than to prove the existence of some law or some religious command. He closed the gates of the sanctuary against the newly-awakened poetical impulse.

It is singular, however, that Anan and his followers grounded their opposition to the Talmud on the example of the founder of Christianity. According to their idea Jesus was a God-fearing, holy man, who had never desired to be recognised as a prophet, nor to set up a new religion in opposition to Judaism, but simply to confirm the precepts of the Torah and to abrogate laws imposed by human authority. Besides acknowledging the founder of Christianity, Anan also recognised Mahomet as the prophet of the Arabs. But he did not allow that the Torah had been repealed either by Jesus or by Mahomet, binding as it was for all time.

It is impossible to ascertain the number of Anan's adherents who followed him in his banishment. His disciples called themselves, after him, Ananites and Karaites (Karaim, Karaimen, Bene Mikra), while to their adversaries they gave the nick-name of Rabbanites, which is equivalent to "Partisans of Authority." At first the variance and irritation existing between the two parties was extremely violent. It is hardly necessary to say that the representatives of the academies place the chief of the party and his adherents under a ban of excommunication, and excluded them from the pale of Judaism. But on their side the Karaites renounced all connection with the Rabbanites, entered into no marriage with them,

refused to eat at their table, and even abstained from visiting the house of a Rabbanite on the sabbath, because they considered that the holy day was desecrated there. The Rabbanites pronounced the Karaites heretics, preached against them from the pulpit, especially against their custom of spending the sabbath-eve in darkness, and refused to allow the followers of Anan to take part in the prayers. The Karaites, on their side, could not sufficiently abuse the two academies and their representatives. They applied to them the allegory of the prophet Zechariah, of the two women who carried Sin in a bushel to Babylon, and there founded a dwelling-place for her. "The two women are the seats of the Geonim in Sora and Anbar (Pumbaditha)." This satire, which probably originated with Anan, was perpetrated by the Karaites, and they never called the two academies otherwise than "the two women."

Thus, for the third time, the Jewish race was divided into two hostile camps. Like Israel and Judah, during the first period, and the Pharisees and Sadducees in the time of the Second Temple, the Rabbanites and Karaites were now in opposition to one another. Jerusalem, the holy mother, who had already witnessed so many wars between her sons, again become the scene of a fratricidal struggle. The Karaite community, which had withdrawn from the general union, acknowledged Anan as the legitimate Prince of the Captivity, and conferred this honourable title on him and his descendants. Both parties exerted themselves as much as possible to widen the breach.

After Anan's death his followers felt so great a reverence for him that they introduced prayers in his honour into the Sabbath service. They prayed for him thus: "May God be merciful to the Prince Anan, the man of God, who facilitated the way to the Torah, and opened the eyes of the Karaites;

who redeemed many from sin and showed us the way to righteousness. May God grant him a good place among the seven classes who enter into Paradise." This service, in memory of Anan is still in use with the Karaites of the present day.

It is impossible, however, for an impartial judgment to endorse this encomium, for it is impossible to discern in Anan any greatness of mind. He was not a profound thinker, and was entirely devoid of all philosophical knowledge. He had so mean a conception of the soul that, in painfully exact adherence to the letter of the Bible, he designated the blood as its seat. But he was also inconsequent in his opposition to Talmudical Judaism, for he allowed not a few religious laws to continue in force which could no more be traced to a Biblical origin than the institutions which he rejected.

After Anan's death the Karaite community conferred their leadership on his son, Saul. Certain of Anan's disciples, who called themselves Ananites, differed on various points from their master, especially touching the prescribed mode of killing birds. Thus, immediately after Anan's death, the enduring character which he had desired to impart to religious life was destroyed, and there arose a division which increased with every generation. This schism caused the Karaites to study the Bible more closely, and to support and strengthen their position against one another, and against the Rabbanites from Holy Writ. It was for this reason that the study of the Bible was carried on by the Karaites with great ardour. With this study the knowledge of Hebrew grammar and the Massora, the determination of the manner of reading the Holy Scripture, went hand in hand. There sprang up many commentators on the Bible, and altogether a luxuriant literature was formed, as each party, thinking it had discovered something new

in the Bible, desired to have its authority generally acknowledged.

While the Karaites were thus extremely active the Rabbanites were most unfruitful in literary productions. A single work is all that is known as having appeared in those times. Judah, the blind Gaon of Sora, who has already been mentioned, and who had done much to oppose Anan's claim, composed a Talmudical Compendium, under the title of "Short and Established Practice" (*Halachot Kenota*). In this work Judah collected and arranged in an orderly manner the subjects which were scattered over the Talmud, and indicated briefly, omitting all discussions, what still held good in practice. To judge from a few fragments, Judah's *Halachot* were written in Hebrew, by which means he rendered the Talmud popular and intelligible. For this reason the work penetrated to the most distant Jewish communities, and became the model for later compositions of a similar description.

The Karaite disturbances also contributed to lessen the authority of the Exilarch. Until the time of Anan the academies and their colleges had been subordinate to the Prince of the Captivity, and to the principals of the schools chosen or confirmed by him; at the same time, however, they had no direct influence over the appointment to this office when it became vacant. But having once succeeded in dispossessing Anan of the exilarchate, the Gaons determined that this power should not be wrested from their hands, and accordingly from this time exercised it on the ground that they could not allow princes of Karaite opinions to be at the head of the Jewish commonwealth. The exilarchate, which had been hereditary since the time of Bostanai, became elective after Anan, and the presidents of the academies directed the election. On the death of Chananya (*Achunai*), and hardly

ten years after Anan's defection from Rabbanism, a struggle for the exilarchate broke out afresh between two pretenders, Zaccai ben Achunai and Natronai ben Chabibai. The latter was a member of the college under Judah. The two heads of the schools at this period, Malka bar Acha, of Pumbaditha (771—73), and Chaninai Kahana ben Huna, of Sora (765—75), united to bring about the overthrow of Natronai, and succeeded in procuring his banishment from Babylonia, probably by the court of the Caliph. He emigrated to Maghreb (Kairoan), in which city there had existed ever since its foundation a numerous Jewish population. Zaccai was confirmed in the office of Exilarch. The exilarchate continued to become more and more dependent on the Gaonate, which often deposed obnoxious princes, and not infrequently banished them. But as the Exilarchs, when they arrived at power, attempted to free themselves from this state of dependence, there occurred collisions which exerted an evil influence on the Babylonian commonwealth.

About the same time as Karaism sprang into existence, an event occurred which only slightly affected the development of Jewish history, but which roused the spirits of the scattered race, and restored their courage. The heathen king of a barbaric people, living in the north, together with all his court, adopted the Jewish religion. The Chazars, or Chozars, a nation of Finnish origin, related to the Bulgars, Avars, Ugurs or Hungarians, had settled, after the dissolution of the empire of the Huns, on the frontier between Europe and Asia. They had founded a kingdom on the Volga (which they called the Itil or Atel) where it runs into the Caspian Sea, in the neighbourhood of Astrachan, and now the home of the Kalmucks. Their kings, who bore the title of Chakan or Chagan, had led these warlike sons of the steppes from victory to victory.

The Chazars inspired the Persians with so great a dread, that one of their kings, Chosroes by name, found no other way of protecting his dominions against their violent invasions, than by building a strong wall, which blocked up the passes between the Caucasus and the sea. But this "gate of the gates" (Bab al abwab, near Derbend) did not long serve as a barrier against the warlike courage of the Chazars. After the fall of the Persian empire they crossed the Caucasus, invaded Armenia, and conquered the Crimean peninsula, which bore the name of Chazaria for some time. The Byzantine emperors trembled at the name of the Chazars, and flattered them, and paid them a tribute, in order to restrain their lust after the booty of Constantinople. The Bulgarians, and other tribes, were the vassals of the Chazars, and the people of Kiev (Russians) on the Dnieper were obliged to furnish them every year with a sword, and fine skins from every fur-hunt. With the Arabs, whose near neighbours they gradually became, they carried on terrible wars.

Like their neighbours, the Bulgarians and the Russians, the Chazars professed a coarse religion, which was combined with sensuality and lewdness. The Chazars became acquainted with Islamism and Christianity through the Arabs and Greeks, who came to the capital, Balanyiar, on matters of business, in order to exchange the products of their countries for fine furs. There were also Jews in the land of the Chazars; they were some of the fugitives who had escaped (723) the mania for conversion which possessed the Byzantine Emperor Leo. It was through these Grecian Jews that the Chazars became acquainted with Judaism. As interpreters or merchants, physicians or counsellors, the Jews were known and beloved by the Chazarian court, and they inspired the warlike Bulan with a love of Judaism.

In subsequent times, however, the Chazars had but a vague knowledge of the motive which induced their forefathers to embrace Judaism. One of their later Chagans gives the following account of their conversion: The king Bulan conceived a horror of the foul idolatry of his ancestors, and prohibited its exercise within his dominions, without, however, adopting any other form of religion. He was encouraged by a dream in his endeavours to discover the proper manner of worshipping God. Having gained a great victory over the Arabs, and conquered the Armenian fortress of Ardebil, Bulan determined to adopt the Jewish religion openly. The Caliph and the Byzantine emperor desired, however, to induce the king of the Chazars to embrace their respective religions, and with this intention sent to Bulan deputations with letters and valuable presents, and men well versed in religious matters. The king thereupon arranged for a religious discussion to take place before him between a Byzantine ecclesiastic, a Mahometan sage, and a learned Jew. The champions of the three religions disputed the whole question, however, without being able to convince one another or the king of the excellence of their respective religions as compared with the other two. But as Bulan had remarked that the representatives of the religion of Christ, and of Islamism both referred to Judaism as the foundation and point of departure of their faiths, he declared to the ambassadors of the Caliph and the Emperor that as he had heard from the opponents of Judaism themselves their impartial avowal of the excellence of that religion, he would carry out his intention of acknowledging Judaism as his religion. He thereupon immediately offered himself for circumcision. The Jewish sage who was the means of obtaining Bulan's conversion is supposed to have been Isaac Sanjari or Sinjari.

It is possible that the circumstances under which

the Chazars embraced Judaism have been embellished by legend, but the fact itself is too definitely proved on all sides to allow of there being any doubt as to its reality. Besides Bulan, the nobles of his kingdom, numbering nearly four thousand, adopted the Jewish religion. Little by little it made its way among the people, so that most of the inhabitants of the towns of the Chazarian kingdom were Jews; the army, however, was composed of Mahometan mercenaries. In the earliest times the Judaism of the Chazars may have appeared superficial enough, and have had but little influence on their mind and manners. A successor of Bulan, who bore the Hebrew name of Obadiah, was the first to occupy himself earnestly with the Jewish religion. He invited Jewish sages to settle in his dominions, rewarded them royally, founded synagogues and schools, caused instruction to be given to himself and his people in the Bible and Talmud, and introduced a divine service modelled on that of the ancient communities. So great was the influence which Judaism exercised on the character of this uncivilised race, that while the Chazars who remained heathens sold their children as slaves without a twinge of conscience, those of them who had become Jews abandoned this barbarous custom. After Obadiah came a long series of Jewish Chagans, for according to a fundamental law of the state only Jewish rulers were permitted to ascend the throne. Neither Obadiah nor his successors showed any intolerance towards the non-Jewish population of the country; on the contrary they were placed on a footing of complete equality with the other inhabitants. There was a Supreme Court of Justice, composed of seven judges, of whom two were Jews for the Jewish population, two Mahometans and Christians for those who were of these religions, and one heathen for the Russians and Bulgarians. For some time

the Jews of other countries had no knowledge of the conversion of this powerful kingdom to Judaism, and when at last a vague rumour to this effect reached them, they were of opinion that Chazaria was peopled by the residue of the former ten tribes. The legend runs thus: Far, far beyond the gloomy mountains, beyond the Cimmerian darkness of the Caucasus, there live true worshippers of God, holy men, descendants of Abraham, of the tribes of Simeon, and the half tribe of Manasseh who are so powerful, that five and twenty nations pay them tribute.

About this time—in the second half of the eighth century—the Jews of Europe also emerged a little from the darkness which had covered them for centuries. Favoured by the rulers, or at least neither ill-treated nor persecuted by them, they raised themselves to a certain degree of culture. Charlemagne, the founder of the empire of the Franks, to whom Europe owes its regeneration and partial emancipation from barbarism, also contributed to the spiritual and social advancement of the Jews in France and Germany. By the creation of the Franco-German empire—which extended from the ocean to the further side of the Elbe, and from the Mediterranean to the North Sea—Charlemagne transferred the centre of history to Western Europe, whereas hitherto it had been at Constantinople, on the border separating Eastern Europe and Asia. Although Charlemagne was a protector of the Church, and helped to found the supremacy of the papacy, and Hadrian, the contemporary Pope, was anything but friendly to the Jews, and repeatedly exhorted the Spanish bishops to prevent the Christians from associating with Jews and heathens (Arabs), Charlemagne was too far-seeing to share the prejudices of the clergy with respect to the Jews. In opposition to all the precepts of the Church and decisions of the councils, the first

Frankish emperor favoured the Jews of his empire, and turned to account the knowledge of a learned man of this race, who journeyed to Syria on his account and brought back to France the products of the East. Where other monarchs punished the Jews for purchasing or taking in pledge church vessels from the clergy or the servants of the Church, Charlemagne adopted the opposite course; he inflicted heavy punishment on the sacrilegious ecclesiastics, and absolved the Jews from all penalties.

The Jews were at this period the principal representatives of the commerce of the world. While the nobles devoted themselves to the business of war, the commoners to trades, and the peasants and serfs to agriculture, the Jews, who were not liable to be called upon to perform military service, and possessed no feudal lands, turned their attention to the exportation and importation of goods and slaves, so that the favour extended to them by Charlemagne was in a certain manner a privilege accorded to a commercial company. They only experienced restraint, like other merchants, in their dealings with corn and wine, as the emperor considered it a dishonest business to make a profit on the necessaries of life. This high estimation of the Jews marks a great progress from the narrow-mindedness of the Merovingian monarchs—Gunthram and Dagobert—who saw nothing else in the Jews than murderers of God. But Charlemagne also manifested a deep interest in the spiritual advancement of the Jewish inhabitants of his empire. In the same way as he had cared for the education of the Germans and French, by inviting learned men from Italy, so also he earnestly desired to place a higher culture within the reach of the German and the French Jews. With this intention he removed a learned family, consisting of Kalonymos, his son Moses, and his nephew, from Lucca to Mayence

(787), either with the idea of putting an end to the ignorance of the Jews of Germany, or else in order to make them independent of the academies of the Levant.

Charlemagne's embassy to the powerful Caliph Haroun Alrashid, to which a Jew of the name of Isaac was attached, is familiar to every student of history (797). Although at first Isaac only accompanied the two nobles, Landfried and Sigismund, in the character of interpreter, he was nevertheless admitted into Charlemagne's diplomatic secrets. As, however, the two principal ambassadors died on the journey, the Caliph's reply and the valuable presents which he had forwarded, fell into Isaac's sole charge, and he was received by the Emperor at Aix in solemn audience. The Emperor is said to have also requested the Caliph through his embassy to send him a learned Jew from Babylon, for his country, and Haroun is reported to have sent him a man answering his requirements. This man was a certain Machir, whom Charlemagne placed at the head of the Jewish congregation of Narbonne. Machir, who, like Kalonymos of Lucca, became the ancestor of a learned posterity, founded a Talmudical school at Narbonne.

Owing to their favourable position in the Franco-German Empire, where they held land, the Jews were permitted to undertake voyages and carry on business, and were not harassed either by the people or the really religious German ecclesiastics; they were also enabled to abandon themselves to their inclination for travel and thus spread through many of the provinces of Germany. In the ninth century numbers of them dwelt in the towns of Magdeburg, Merseburg, and Ratisbon. From these points they penetrated further and further into the countries inhabited by the Slavonians on the further side of the Oder as far as Bohemia and Poland. Meanwhile, in spite of all

the favour which Charlemagne extended to them, he, like the best men of the Middle Ages, found it difficult to treat them on an entirely equal footing with the Christians. The chasm, which the Fathers of the Church had placed between Christianity and Judaism, and which had been widened by individual ecclesiastics and the synods, was far too deep to be overleapt by an Emperor who was devotedly attached to the Church. It was thus that Charlemagne maintained on one point the difference between Jew and Christian, and perpetuated it by means of a formality in taking the oath, which was imposed on the Jews who were witnesses against, or accusers of, a Christian. They were required, in taking an oath against a Christian, to surround themselves with thorns, to take the Torah in their right hand, and to call down upon themselves Naaman's leprosy and the punishment of Korah's faction in witness of the truth of their statement. If there was not a Hebrew copy of the Torah at hand, a Latin Bible was held to be sufficient. It is impossible not to admit, however, that it was already a deviation from the ordinances of the Church to allow the Jews to testify on oath at all against a Christian.

In the East the Jews were also reminded in a disagreeable manner, at the beginning of this ninth century, that they had to expect disregard and oppression even at the hands of the best rulers. The reigns of the Abassid Caliphs Haroun Alrashed and his sons are regarded as the most flourishing period of the Caliphate of the East, but it is at this very time that Jewish complaints of oppression rise loudest. It is possible that in re-enacting Omar's law against the Christians (807), Haroun also made it applicable to the Jews; for they were compelled to wear a distinctive badge of yellow on their dress, in the same way as the Christians were obliged to wear blue, and they had also to use a rope instead of a girdle. When, after his

death (809) his two sons, Mahomet Alemin and Abdallah Almamun, for whom their father had divided the Caliphate into two parts, engaged in a destructive civil war, throughout the whole extent of the great empire, the Jews, especially those in Palestine, experienced severe persecution. The Christians, however, were their companions in misfortune. During the four years (809-813) of this fratricidal struggle, robbery and massacre seem to have been the order of the day. The sufferings must have been so terrible that a preacher of those times declared them to be a sign of the speedy coming of the Messiah. "Israel can only be redeemed by means of penitence, and true penitence can only be evoked by suffering, affliction, wandering, and want," declared this orator in consolation of his afflicted congregation. In the civil war raging between the two Caliphs he fancied he saw the approaching destruction of the Ishmaelite rule and the approach of the Messianic empire. "Two brothers will finally rule over the Ishmaelites (Mahometans); there will then arise a descendant of David, and in the days of this king the Lord of Heaven will found a kingdom which shall never perish." "God will exterminate the sons of Esau (Byzance), Israel's enemies, and also the sons of Ishmael, his adversaries." But these, like many others, were delusive hopes. The civil war, indeed, shook the Caliphate to its foundations, but did not destroy it. Alemin was killed, and Almamun became the sole ruler of this extensive empire.

It was during Almamun's reign (813-833) that civilisation flourished most luxuriantly in the Caliphate of the East. As he was imbued with tolerance, it was possible for the sciences and a certain form of philosophy to develop themselves. Bagdad, Kairoan in Northern Africa, and Merv in Chorasán, became the centres

for all branches of sciences, such as Europe did not possess until many centuries later. The genius of the Greeks celebrated its resurrection in Arab garb. Statesmen struggled with men of leisure and seclusion for the palm of erudition. Meanwhile the Jews did not remain unaffected by this enthusiasm for science. Investigation and subtle inquiry are indeed a part of their innermost nature. They took an honest interest in these intellectual exertions, and many of their performances gained the approbation of the Arabs. The history of Arabian civilisation has several Jewish names recorded in its annals. Sahal, surnamed Rabban (the Rabbanite, the sage of the Talmud), of Tabaristan on the Caspian Sea (about the year 800), was celebrated as a physician and mathematician. He translated into Arabic the *Almagest* of the Greek astronomer Ptolemy, the text-book of astronomy during the Middle Ages, and was the first to discover the refraction of light. His son Abu-Sahal Ali (835-853) is placed among those who advanced the study of medicine, and was the teacher of two Arabian medical authorities, Razi and Anzarbi.

With even more ardour than that with which they had applied themselves to medicine, mathematics and astronomy, the Mussulmans prosecuted the study of the science of religion as a sort of philosophy of religion (*Kalam*). It was treated with as much importance as the affairs of State, and exercised a certain influence on politics. The expounders of the Koran, in trying to explain away the grossly-sensual references to God, and to reconcile the contradictions contained in that work, developed ideas which projected far beyond the restricted horizon of Islam. Many commentators came, by reason of their rationalistic explanations, into conflict with the champions of the text, and were branded by them as heretics. The Mutazilists

(heretics) laid great stress upon the unity of God, and desired that no definite attributes should be ascribed to Him, for thereby the divine Being appeared to them to be dismembered and multiplied, and thus several persons seemed to be included in the idea of God. They further asserted the freedom of the human will because the unconditional pre-determination by God, which the oriental mind assumed, and the Koran confirmed, was incompatible with divine justice, which rewards the good and punishes the bad. They believed, however, that they still stood on the same ground as the Koran, although, of course, going far beyond it, and in order to bring their doctrine into harmony with the uncompromising sentences of their religious book, they employed the same method as the Alexandrian-Jewish philosophers of religion had used to reconcile the Bible with Grecian philosophy; they adopted an allegorical interpretation of the text. This interpretation was employed for the purpose of bridging over the gulf existing between the rationalistic idea of God and the irrational idea as taught by the Koran. The rationalistic Mutazilistic theology of the Mahometans, although denounced at first as heretical, steadily gained the ascendancy; the schools of Bagdad and Bassora rang with its doctrines. The Caliph Almamun exalted it into the theology of the court, and condemned the old simple views of religion.

The adherents of orthodoxy were horrified with this license of interpretation, for the text of the Koran was secretly forced into an opposite meaning, and simple faith lost all support. They, therefore, adhered strictly to the letter, and to the natural meaning of the text. Some of them, however, went still further. They read in their literal meaning all the expressions concerning God, however gross they might be, which occurred in

the Koran, or were used by tradition, and constructed a most vile theology. Mahomet having communicated a revelation thus: "My Lord came to meet me, gave me his hand in greeting, looked in my face, laid his hand between my shoulders, so that I felt his cold finger-tips," the orthodox school accepted all this in revolting literalness. This school (Anthropomorphists) did not hesitate to declare that "God was a body possessed of members and a definite form; he was seven spans high, measured by his own span. He was in a particular spot—upon his throne. It was permissible to affirm of him that he moves, ascends and descends, stops, and rests." These and still more blasphemous descriptions of the Supreme Being in the same grossly materialistic strain, were given by the orthodox Mahometan teachers of religion, in order to show their adhesion to the letter of the Koran in contradistinction to the Rationalists.

The Jews of the East lived in so close a connection with the Mussulmans that they could not fail to be affected by these tendencies. The same phenomena repeated themselves, therefore, in Jewish circles, and the variance between Karaites and Rabbanites contributed to the transmission to Judaism of the Islamic controversies. The official supporters of Judaism, however, the colleges of Sora and Pumbaditha, held aloof from them. Entirely absorbed in the Talmud, and its exposition, they either took no notice at first of the impassioned agitation of mind prevailing, or else refused to yield to it. But outside of the colleges the minds of men were bestirring themselves in this arena, and dragged Judaism into a fresh struggle.

The faint ray of philosophy which fell upon this ingenuous, senseless, dull, religious world, produced a dazzling illumination. The Karaites for the most part were of a Mutazilistic (rational-

istic) tendency, while the Rabbanites, on the contrary, having to defend the strange Agadic statements concerning God, were antagonistic to science. But as the religious edifice of Karaism was not yet entirely finished, there arose new sects within its pale, with peculiar theories and different religious practices.

The first person who is known to have imparted the Mutazilistic tendency of Islamic theology to Judaism was Judah Judghan, the Persian, of the town of Hamadan (about 800). His adversaries relate of him that he was originally a camel-herd. He himself pretended to be the herald of the Messiah, and when he had gained adherents, unfolded to them a peculiar doctrine, which he asserted had been made known to him in a vision.

In opposition to the ancient traditional views, in accordance with which the biblical account of God's deeds and feelings must be taken literally, Judah Judghan asserted, "That we ought not to represent God sensibly or anthropomorphically, for He is elevated above all created things. The expressions which the Torah employs in this connection are to be understood in a highly metaphorical sense. We must also not take for granted that, by virtue of His omnipotence and omniscience, God predetermines the acts of man. Much rather ought we to proceed from God's justice, and assume that man is master of his actions, and possessed of a free will, and that reward and punishment are meted out to us according to our merit." While Judah of Hamadan was possessed of liberal views concerning theoretical questions, he recommended the severest asceticism in practice. His adherents abstained from meat and wine, fasted and prayed frequently, but were less strict with respect to the festivals. His followers, who long maintained themselves as a peculiar sect under the name of Judghanites,

believed so firmly in him that they asserted that he was not dead, but would appear again, in order to bring a new doctrine with him, as the Shiites believed of Ali. One of his disciples, by name Mushka, was desirous of imposing the doctrine of his master on the Jews by force. He marched out of Hamadan with a troop of comrades of similar sentiments, but was killed, together with nineteen of his followers, in the neighbourhood of Koom (east of Hamadan, south-west from Teheran), most probably by the Mussulmans.

Judah Judghan attached more importance to an ascetic mode of living than to establishing the philosophical basis of Judaism, and was therefore rather the founder of a sect than a religious philosopher. A contemporary Karaite, Benjamin ben Moses of Nahavendi (about 800-820), made the Mutazilistic philosophy of religion indigenous to the Karaites. Benjamin Nahavendi is regarded by his fellow-Karaites as an authority, and is honoured by them as greatly as Anan, their founder, although he differed from the latter on many points. Benjamin was entirely permeated with the conceptions of the Mutazilists. He was scandalised, not only by the sensible and human characteristics of God contained in the Scripture, but also by the Revelation and the creation. He could not rest satisfied with the idea that the spiritual Being had created this earthly world, had come in contact with it, had circumscribed himself in space for the purpose of the revelation on Sinai, and was reported to have uttered articulate sounds. In order not to abandon his elevated idea of God, and at the same time to preserve the revelation of the Torah, he adopted the following notion, as others had done before him : God had created immediately only the spiritual world and the angels ; the terrestrial universe, on the other hand, had been created by the angels, so that God ought only to be regarded

as the mediate creator of the world. In the same way the revelation, the giving of the Law on Sinai, and the inspiration of the prophets were all the work of an angel only. Certain disciples adopted Benjamin's views, and formed a peculiar sect, called (it is not known for what reason) the Makariyites or Maghariyites.

While Benjamin Nahavendi, as is generally acknowledged, deviated widely from the Jewish system with respect to religious philosophy, he approached the Rabbanites on the subject of morals; he adopted many Talmudical ordinances, and left it to the free choice of the Karaites to reject or adopt them as their standard. Benjamin Nahavendi introduced a species of excommunication, which only differed slightly from the excommunication of the Rabbanites, for the purpose of giving emphasis to the laws. When an accused person refused to obey the summons served on him, and attempted to evade judgment, it was permitted to curse him seven days running, and then to pronounce excommunication on him. The excommunication consisted in the prohibition of intercourse with all the members of the community, who were also forbidden to greet him or to accept anything from him; he was to be treated altogether like a dead person, until he submitted. If he obstinately disregarded the decree, it was lawful to hand him over to temporal justice. Although Benjamin Nahavendi inclined to Rabbanism on certain points, he adhered firmly, nevertheless, to the Karaite principle of unrestrained research in the Bible. One ought not to tie oneself down to the authorities, but to follow one's own conviction; the son may differ from the father, the disciple from the master, as soon as they have reasons for their different views. "Inquiry is a duty, and errors occasioned by inquiry do not constitute a sin."

In the same manner as the orthodox Mahometan

teachers of religion worked counter to the unrestrained subtlety of the Mutazilists, and, falling into the opposite extreme, conceived the divinity as possessed of a bodily form, so also did the Jewish adherents of the orthodox doctrine go astray, and, regarding the rationalistic innovation as a defection from Judaism, conceived the most absurd ideas concerning the materiality of God. They even desired to accept in their most literal sense the Biblical expressions, "God's hand, God's foot, His sitting down, or walking about." The Agadic exposition of the Scripture, which occasionally made use of material, tangible figures, adapted to the comprehension of the people, promoted the acceptance of this anti-Jewish theory. This theory, which was the creation of an imbecile, but which gained adherents by reason of its mysterious nature, gives limb for limb a corporeal description of the Deity, measures His height from head to foot by the parasang-scale, speaks in blasphemous detail of God's right and left eye, of His upper and lower lip, of His beard and other members, which it would be sacrilegious even to repeat. In order, however, not to prejudice the sublimity and majesty of God, this theory enlarges each limb to enormous proportions, and considers that justice has been done to the case when it is added that the scale by which the limbs are measured considerably exceeds the whole world (the book *Shiur-Komah* contains similar blasphemy). To this God, whom it thus anatomised and measured, the theory assigned a special house in heaven with seven halls (*Hechalot*). In the uppermost hall God is seated upon an elevated throne, the extent of which is measured by the same enormous scale. The halls are populated by this materialistic theory with myriads of angels, to some of whom are assigned names formed by the arbitrary combination of Hebrew and foreign

words into barbaric sounds. The chief angel, however, is a certain Metatoron, and the theory adds, after the example of the Christian and Mahometan authors, that he was Enoch or Henoch, originally a man, but transported by God into heaven, and converted into flames of fire. With evident pleasure the theory dwells upon the description of this abortion of a morbid fancy. It even dared to place him at the side of the Divinity, and to call him the "little God."

This theory, which was a compound of misunderstood Agadas, and of Jewish, Christian, and Mahometan fantastic notions, clothed itself in a mysterious obscurity, and pretended to be a revelation. In order to answer the inquiry whence it had acquired this wisdom which enabled it to scoff at Judaism, in other words, at the Bible and the Talmud, it claims a divine revelation. As there is no nonsense, however apparent, which cannot find adherents when earnestly and impressively enunciated, this doctrine of mystery, of which the gist was the gross conception of God, found many followers. Its adepts called themselves "Men of Faith." They boasted of possessing the means of obtaining a view of the divine household. By virtue of certain incantations, invocations of the names of God and the angels, and the recitation of certain prayer-like chants, combined with fasting and an ascetic mode of living, they pretended to be able to perform supernatural deeds. For this purpose they made use of amulets and cameos (*Kameot*), and wrote upon them the names of God and the angels in certain figures: miracle-working was a trifle to these mystics. They asserted that every pious man had the power of performing miracles, if he only employed the proper means. To this end they wrote a number of works on the theory and practice of the esoteric doctrine; for the most part they contained downright nonsense, but here and

there they possessed a strain of poetry. But this mystical literature contained nothing more definite than hints; the adepts would only surrender the real key to an insight into the divine secrets and to the power of performing miracles, to certain persons in whose hand and forehead they pretended to discover lines which proved them to be worthy of this favour.

This mystical doctrine flourished chiefly in Palestine, where the real study of the Talmud was languishing; little by little it made its way into Babylonia. This became apparent on the occasion of the election of a principal of the Pumbaditha academy (814). The best claim to this office was that advanced by a certain Mar-Aaron (ben Samuel), both by reason of his erudition and on account of his having acted up till then as chief judge. Nevertheless, preference was given to the claim of a rival, the aged Joseph bar Abba, who was far inferior to him in learning; the reason of this preference being that the latter was an adept of mysticism and was believed to be favoured with the intimacy of the prophet Elijah. One day this same Joseph bar Abba was presiding at a public meeting, he exclaimed with rapture, "Make room for the old man who is just coming in." The eyes of all present were immediately turned to the entrance, and those to the right of the principal respectfully stepped aside. They saw no one enter, however, but were therefore all the more positively convinced that the prophet Elijah had entered invisibly, had seated himself on the right of his friend Joseph, and had been present during the whole of his discourse. After that time no one dared to occupy the place at the side of the principal of the Pumbaditha academy, for it had been honoured and hallowed by Elijah, and it became the custom to leave it vacant.

Joseph's successor, Mar-Abraham ben Sherira

(816-828), was likewise a mystic. It was said that he could foresee the future from the fluttering of the palm leaves on a calm day.

More liberal views, and even Karaism, found a way into the halls of learning, just as mysticism had done before. Through these opposed views quarrels naturally arose, which came to light on the vacation of the office of Exilarch. In the year 825 there was to be an election of the new Prince of the Exile. For this office there were two candidates, David ben Judah and Daniel. The latter was inclined to Karaism, and perhaps just on this account found in South Babylonia many supporters who gave him their votes. The North Babylonians who belonged to Pumbaditha (Anbar) decided in favour of David, as he doubtless belonged to the orthodox party. The quarrel was carried on with much virulence. The mystic Abraham ben Sherira was deposed in consequence, and Joseph ben Chiya appointed in his place. It is not known by which party this was brought about. But Abraham had followers in Pumbaditha, who gave him their support, and who refused allegiance to his rival Gaon. The quarrel could not be decided in their own midst, and both parties appealed to the Caliph Almamun to confirm the Exilarch of their choice. Almamun, however, at that time was engaged in a dispute about the Eastern Church. He had been called upon to decide between two claimants for the Chaldæo-Christian Patriarchate, and wanted to rid himself of such litigations. He therefore declined to interfere with the internal affairs of the Jews and Christians, and decreed that in future each party should be empowered to elect its own religious chief. If ten Jews wished to elect an Exilarch, ten Christians an Archbishop, or ten Fire-worshippers a Chief Priest, they had the power to do so. This decree was unsatisfactory to both parties, inasmuch as it left the quarrel undecided; it is not certain

how it ended. So much, however, is known that David ben Judah asserted his authority, and filled the post for about ten years (till 840).

In the School of Sora quarrels also broke out (827). The quarrel between the chiefs lasted for a longer time in the School of Pumbaditha. Eventually a compromise was effected. There were to be two Gaons holding office together who should share equally the title and the revenue. Abraham, however, was to have the privilege of giving the address at the common assembly.

One day both heads of the schools of Pumbaditha met in Bagdad at an installation ceremony, where it was customary to give an address. The capital of the Caliphate had at this time a numerous Jewish community and several synagogues. Bagdad, which was nearer to Pumbaditha than to Sora, belonged to the district of the School of Pumbaditha. Its president enjoyed the preference to that of Sora.

As the lecture was about to be given, and it was proclaimed aloud, "Hear what the heads of the schools are about to say," those present burst into tears on account of the existing disunion in their midst. The tears of the multitude had such an effect upon Joseph ben Chiya that he arose and openly tendered his resignation in favour of his opponent.

He received an insulting blessing as the reward of his noble resolve. "May God give you a share in the world to come," said his opponent, who now assumed his position. It was only after Abraham's death (828) that the noble Joseph was re-installed as Gaon of Pumbaditha (828-33).

All disputes had ceased in the School of Sora, but they soon broke out again, and created such confusion, that Sora was without a Gaon for two years (837-839). We are in the dark as to the true reason of all this discord, but it is probable

that the rise of Karaism had something to do with it. However much the Rabbanites hated the Karaite sect, though they declared it heretical, and kept away from it, they yet adopted several of its teachings, and imitated it in others. If Anan's sect had sown the seeds of dissension amongst the followers of the more ancient creed, it was itself not by any means free therefrom. The principal dogma of Karaism was the unlimited freedom in Exegesis and the regulation of religion according to the healthy result of inquiry.

The result was that every Karaite constructed his own Judaism according as he explained the text in one or another way. Religious practice was regulated according to the good or bad ideas of the expositor. In addition to this, Exegesis was yet in its infancy. The knowledge of the Hebrew language, the basis of a healthy, rational Exegesis, was yet scanty, and arbitrariness had every opportunity of asserting itself. Everyone believed himself to be in the possession of the truth, and pitied those who did not share his views, when he did not condemn to them. We have a sad picture of the condition of Karaism, scarcely a century after Anan's death. New sects, too, arose from it, the founders of which had strange ideas about some customs of Judaism. Musa (or Mesvi) and Ishmael, from the town of Akbara (seven miles east of Bagdad), are said to have held peculiar views about the observance of the Sabbath. What these views were we do not now know, but they approached the doctrines of the Samaritans. The two Akbarites further declared that the Pentateuchal prohibition against eating certain parts of the fat of an animal only referred to the sacrifices, and that it was otherwise permissible to use them. Musa and Ishmael found followers who lived according to their doctrines. These formed a sect within Karaism, and called themselves Akbarites.

Simultaneously with these there arose another false teacher, Abu-Amram Moses, a Persian from the little town of Safran (near Kerman-Shah in Persia), who had emigrated to the town of Tiflis in Armenia. Abu-Amram Altiflisi propounded other views, which he believed were based upon the text of the Bible. He, like the other Karaites, wished to consider cousins as blood-relations, who would therefore not be allowed to intermarry. He regarded the calendar in his own way, and differed from both the Karaites and Rabbanites. There was to be no fixed calendar, nor should the new month commence when the new moon became visible, but at the moment it became eclipsed. Moses, the Persian, denied the bodily resurrection of the dead, and introduced innovations which are no longer known. His followers formed themselves into a peculiar sect, under the name of Abu-Amramites or Tiflisites, and continued to exist for several centuries.

Another Moses (or Mesvi), from Baalbek in Syria, continued the schism, and departed still more from Karaism. He affirmed that the Feast of Passover must always happen on Thursday, and the Day of Atonement on the Sabbath, because this day is designated in the Bible as "the Sabbath of Sabbaths." In many points, Moses of Baalbek differed from both Karaites and Rabbanites. He enacted amongst his sect that in praying they should always turn to the West instead of in the direction of the Temple. He, too, formed a sect called after his name, which continued to exist for a long time.

Seeing that Karaism had no religious centre, and no spiritual court to represent its unity, it is quite natural that there could be no sympathy between one Karaite community and another. And so it happened that the people of Chorasán observed the festivals in a different manner to the other Karaites.

The same decision as to the Feast of Passover

was followed among the Christians from the first centuries till after the assembly of the Nicene Council. The Karaites recognised the principle of tradition; they called the rule of analogy, tradition (Haatakah) and hereditary teaching (Sebel-ha Yerusha). In practice, however, they were arbitrary, inasmuch as they retained one thing as traditional, while they rejected others possessed of equal claims to be considered traditional. Who the men were that sought to define the three rules within which religion was bounded is not known. The rule of analogy led Karaism into new difficulties, especially as regards the marriage restriction of certain blood-relations, as to which they fell from one difficulty into another. They held that the affinity between a man and his wife was, according to the Bible, continuous. Consequently step-children would not be allowed to intermarry. But the Karaites even went still further. The affinity between a man and his wife continued, even if the marriage were dissolved. If in such a case the husband or the wife married again the affinity was extended to the new family, although they were unknown to each other. Hence the members of the family of the one husband could not intermarry with members of the other husband's family. This affinity continued to the third and fourth generations, so that the circle of affinity was considerably increased. The authors of this system of artificial relationship called it "handing over" (Rikkub Tar-kib). Why they should have stopped at the fourth generation is difficult to see, but it appears that they feared the ultimate consequences. Such was the confusion in which Karaism had enveloped itself in its endeavour to break with the past.

CHAPTER VI.

FAVOURABLE CONDITION OF THE JEWS IN THE FRANKISH DOMINIONS, AND THE DECAY OF THE EXILARCHATE IN THE EAST.

The Jews under Louis le Débonnaire—The Empress Judith and her Veneration for Judaism—Agobard, Bishop of Lyons—Conversion of Bishop Bodo—Amolo's effort against the Jews—Charles the Bald—Troubles in Beziers and Toulouse—Decree against the Jews in Italy—Boro of Burgundy—Basilus—Leo the Philosopher—Decline of the Exilarchate—The Geonim acquire Additional Influence—The Prayer Book of Amram—Mar Zemach—Literary and Scientific Activity of the Jews—Decay of Karaism—Dissensions at Pumbaditha.

814—920 C.E.

THE Jews of Europe had no knowledge of the split in Judaism that was taking place in the East, of the struggle between the Exilarchate and the Gaonate, or of the rivalry of the heads of the schools. Babylonia, the seat of the Gaonic schools, was looked upon by them almost in the light of a heaven upon earth, as a place of eternal peace, and of the knowledge of God. Whenever a decision was received from Pumbaditha it was considered an important event, and was read with the greatest respect. Such a decision was obeyed as implicitly as a Papal Bull among the Catholics, because it was given without pretension. The Western nations, as yet in their childhood with respect to literature, were under guardianship as regards religion—the Christians under the Papal throne, the Jews under the Gaonic schools.

It is true, some prominent Jews in France and Italy occupied themselves with the study of mysticism and the Agada, but they regarded themselves as dependent upon the Eastern authorities.

The favourable condition of the Jews in the Frankish dominions, under Charles the Great, was continued under his son Louis (814—840). This urged them on to a certain spiritual activity. They showed so much zeal in the cause of Judaism that they even inspired Christians with love for it. The successor of Charles the Great, the generous but weak Louis, in spite of his religious inclination, which obtained for him the name of “the pious,” showed extraordinary favour to the Jews. He took them under his special protection, shielding them from injustice, both on the part of the barons and the clergy. They enjoyed the right of settling in any part of the kingdom. In spite of numerous decrees to the contrary, they were not only allowed to employ Christian workmen, but they might even import slaves. The clergy were forbidden to baptise the slaves of Jews, to enable them to regain their freedom. Out of regard for them the market day was changed from the Sabbath day to Sunday. The Jews were freed from the punishment of scourging, and had the jurisdiction over Jewish offenders in their own hands. They were, moreover, not subject to the barbarous ordeals of fire and water. They were allowed to carry on their trades without let or hindrance, but they had to pay a tax to the treasury, and to make a periodical return of their income. Jews also farmed the taxes, and obtained through this privilege a certain power over the Christians, although this was contrary to the express determination of canonic laws.

An officer (*Magister Judæorum*) was appointed whose duty was to watch that the rights of the Jews were not encroached upon. In the time of Louis this office was filled by a man named Eberard. One is almost tempted to believe that the remarkable favour shown to the Jews by the pious emperor was mainly due to commercial motives.

The international commerce which Charlemagne established, and which the counsellors of Louis wished to develop, was mostly in the hands of Jews. These could more easily enter into commercial relations with their brethren in other lands because they were not hampered by military service. But there was a deeper reason for the extraordinary favour shown to the Jews, not only to the Jewish merchants, but also to the Jews as such—the bearers of the purified knowledge of God.

The Empress Judith, Louis' second consort, was most friendly to Judaism. This beautiful and spirited queen, the admiration of whose friends was only equalled by the hostility of her foes, had a great respect for the Jewish heroes of antiquity. When the learned Abbot of Fulda, Rhabanus Maurus, wished to win her favour, he could find no more effectual means than to dedicate to her his work on the books of Esther and Judith, and to compare her with both these Jewish heroines. The empress and her friends, and probably also the treasurer Bernhard, the real regent of the kingdom, became patrons of this work, because of the descent of the Jews from the patriarchs and the prophets. "They ought to be honoured on this account," said their friends at court, and their view was shared by the emperor. Cultured Christians refreshed themselves with the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus, and the Jewish philosopher Philo, and read their works in preference to those of the Apostles. Educated ladies and courtiers openly confessed that they esteemed the Jewish law-giver more highly than they did their own. They even went so far as to ask the Jews for their blessing. The Jews had free access to court, and had immediate intercourse with the emperor and those near him. Relatives of the emperor presented Jewish ladies with costly garments in order to show their appreciation and respect.

When such favour was shown them in higher circles, it was only natural that the Jews of the Frankish dominions (which also included Germany and Italy) should enjoy wide toleration, perhaps more than at any other period of their history. The hateful canonical laws were silently annulled. The Jews were allowed to build synagogues, to speak freely about the meaning of Judaism in the hearing of Christians, and even to say that they were "descendants of the patriarchs," "the race of the just," "the children of the Prophet." They could fearlessly give their candid opinion about Christianity, the miracles of the saints, the relics, and image worship. Christians visited the synagogues, and were edified with the Jewish method of conducting divine service, and, strangely enough, were better pleased with the lectures of the Jewish preachers (*Darshanim*) than with those of their own clergy, although the *Darshanim* were hardly in a position to expound the deep tenour of Judaism. So much, however, is certain, that the Jewish preachers delivered their sermons in the vernacular. Clergymen in high station were not ashamed to adopt their expositions of Holy Writ from the Jews. The Abbot Rhabanus Maurus of Fulda confessed that he had learnt several things from the Jews, which he made use in his commentary to the Bible, dedicated to Louis of Germany, who afterwards became emperor.

In consequence of the favour shown to the Jews at court some Christians conceived a liking for Judaism, and were received as Jews. These looked upon Judaism as the true religion, found it more convincing than Christianity, respected the Sabbath, and worked on Sunday. In short, the reign of the Emperor Louis the Pious was a golden era for the Jews of his kingdom, the like of which they never enjoyed in Europe, whether earlier or later. But as the Jewish race has had

enemies at all times, these were sure not to be wanting to the French Jews of this epoch, especially as they were in favour at court, were beloved by the people, and could openly declare their religious views. The followers of strict church discipline saw in the violation of the canonical laws, in the favour shown to the Jews and in the liberty which was then being vouchsafed to them, the ruin of Christendom. Envy and hatred were concealed under the cloak of orthodoxy. The patrons of the Jews at court, with the empress at their head, were hated by the clerical party which strove to rule the emperor, and which now transferred their anger against the liberal court party to the Jews.

The representative of clerical orthodoxy, and of hatred against the Jews at this time, was Agobard, Bishop of Lyons, whom the Church canonised. He was a restless and passionate man, who even went so far as to calumniate the Empress Judith, to rebel against the emperor, and to incite the princes to revolt. He supported the disloyal sons of the emperor, especially Lothaire, against their father. He was called the Ahithophel, who incited Absalom against his father David. This bishop thought to limit the liberty of the Jews, and to reduce them to the low position they had held under the Merovingian kings.

An insignificant occurrence gave him the desired opportunity. The female slave of a respected Jew of Lyons ran away from her master, and to regain her freedom she allowed herself to be baptised (about 827). The Jews who saw in this act an encroachment on their chartered rights and property, demanded the surrender of the runaway slave. On Agobard's refusal to grant this, the Jews turned to Eberard (the *Magister Judæorum*), who threatened to punish the bishop should he persist in his refusal to restore her to her master.

This was the beginning of a contest between Agobard and the Jews, which lasted for several years. It gave rise to many quarrels, and ended in the deposition of Agobard. He did not care so much about the slaves as about the maintenance and assertion of the canonical laws against the Jews. But he now encountered a serious difficulty. Urged on on the one hand by his hatred of the Jews, restrained on the other by his fear of punishment, he did not know how to act. Perplexed, he turned to the representatives of the Church party at court, from whom he learnt that they thoroughly hated the Jews, the empress and her favourites. He tried to gain them over, and by their means to induce the emperor to restrict the liberty of the Jews. These appear to have proposed something of the sort to the emperor. The friendly court party was very active in the meantime to frustrate the plans of the clergy. The emperor summoned the bishops and representatives of Judaism to settle the points in dispute. Agobard, however, was so full of rage at the meeting that, as he himself says, "he roared rather than spoke." He then had an audience with the emperor. When the bishop appeared before Louis, the latter looked at him so fiercely that he could scarcely utter a word, and did not hear anything but the order to withdraw. Ashamed and confused, the bishop turned back to his diocese. However, he soon recovered from his confusion, and plotted anew against the Jews. Agobard delivered anti-Jewish speeches, and he urged his parishioners to break off all intercourse with the Jews, to do no business with them, and to decline entering their service. Fortunately for them their patrons at court were active on their behalf, and did their best to frustrate the designs of the fanatic priests. As soon as they were informed of their action they obtained letters of protection (*indiculi*) from the

emperor, sealed with his seal, and these they sent to the Jews of Lyons.

A letter was likewise sent to the bishop commanding him to discontinue his anti-Jewish sermons under a severe penalty. Another letter was sent to the governor of the Lyons district, bidding him render the Jews all assistance (828). Agobard took no notice of this letter, and spitefully alleged that the imperial decree was spurious — in fact, could not possibly be genuine. Thereupon Eberard, the Magister Judæorum, sent to him, telling him of the emperor's displeasure on account of his disobedience. But he remained so obstinate, that the emperor had to send two commissaries, Gerrick and Frederick, men in high standing at court, armed with full power to bring this stubborn and seditious bishop to reason. What means they were empowered to employ against him we do not know, but they must have been severe, because the few priests who had taken part in Agobard's agitation did not venture to show themselves. It is significant that the people of Lyons did not at all side with their bishop against the Jews.

The Jew-hater Agobard did not rest in his efforts against the Jews. He determined to oppose the court party which favoured the Jews, and to win over the emperor on religious grounds. Perhaps he was already acquainted with the plans of the conspirators Wala, Helisachar, and Hilduin, who desired to incite the sons of the emperor's first marriage against the empress and the chief chancellor Bernhard, because these had induced the emperor to effect a new division of the kingdom in favour of Judith's son. Agobard henceforth divested himself of all timidity, and became quite resolute, as though he anticipated the speedy downfall of the party that favoured the Jews. He first appealed to the bishops, and entreated them to reproach the king with his sin, and induce

him to reduce the Jews to the humble position they occupied at the time of the Merovingians. Only one of Agobard's letters to the prelates is extant, viz., one to the Bishop Nibridius of Narbonne. It is full of bitterness against the Jews, and is interesting both on account of the spirit of the writer, and also on account of the confession he makes therein. Amongst other things he complains that the Christians could at best only succeed in winning a few souls over to Christianity, whilst the Christians, joining Jews at their meals, partook also of their spiritual food. However much Agobard's bitter hatred of the Jews is to be considered as a consequence of his nature, it cannot be denied that he was therein in entire harmony with the teachings of the church. He rightly appeals to the sayings of the Apostles and to the canonic laws. The sanctified decrees of the councils too were doubtless on his side. Agobard, with his gloomy hatred, was strictly orthodox, whilst the emperor Louis with his mildness was inclined to heresy. But Agobard did not venture to spread this opinion openly. He thought rather than showed by his actions that he believed that the emperor had betrayed the church to the Jews. His complaint was echoed in the hearts of the ecclesiastical chiefs.

A number of bishops assembled at Lyons with the object of considering the best method of humbling the Jews, and disturbing their hitherto peaceful existence. They also discussed the question how the emperor might best be influenced to adopt their resolutions. It was resolved at the meeting that a letter should be handed to the emperor, setting forth the wickedness and the danger of favouring the Jews, and formulating the privileges which they considered ought to be abolished (829). The letter of the Synod, as we have it now, is signed by three Bishops, and is entitled, "Concerning the Superstition of the Jews." Agobard

wrote a preface to this manifesto, in which he explains his conduct in the quarrel. In it, after accusing the Jews, he blamed their friends as being the cause of all the evil. The Jews, he said, became bolder through the assistance of the Commissaries, who whispered, too, that the Jews were not so bad after all, but were very dear to the emperor. From the standpoint of faith and of the canonic laws the argument of Agobard and the other bishops was irrefutable, and had the Emperor Louis the Pious been persuaded by this logic, he would have had to extirpate the Jews root and branch. Fortunately, however, he took no notice of it. This happened either because he knew Agobard's character, or because the letter containing the accusations against the Jews never reached him. Agobard's fear that the letter would be intercepted by their friends at court may have proved well founded. The Jew-hating bishop of Lyons however had his revenge. In the following year (830), he became a partisan in the conspiracy against the Empress Judith, by joining the sons who sought to dethrone their father, a plot that they only partly carried into effect. Agobard was thereupon deprived of his office, and had to seek safety in Italy, but Louis soon restored him, after which Agobard left the Jews unmolested.

Till the end of his life Louis remained favourable to the Jews. This is the more surprising as he felt very much hurt when one of his favourites became a convert to Judaism, which might easily have embittered him against them. The conversion of the Bishop Bodo, who had hitherto occupied a high position, created a great sensation in its time. The Chronicles speak of this event in as impressive a manner as they would of extraordinary natural phenomena. The event indeed, was accompanied by peculiar circumstances, and

was a blow to pious Christians. Bodo, or Puoto, descended from an old Alamanic race, a man as well-informed in temporal as in spiritual affairs had become an ecclesiastic, and rose to be a deacon. The emperor favoured him, and in order to have him constantly near him, made him his spiritual adviser. Entertaining strict Catholic opinions, Bodo obtained permission to go to Rome in order to receive the blessing of the Pope, and also to make a pilgrimage to the graves of the apostles and the martyrs. Arrived in Rome, the stronghold of Christianity, Bodo there conceived a strong liking for Judaism. Perhaps the favour shown to the Jews and Judaism at Louis' court had given him this impulse. The immoral life of the clergy in the Christian capital, which had given rise to a satire on Pope Joan, who had defiled the chair of Peter, filled him with disgust, and attracted him to the purer religion of Judaism.

He himself wrote later, that he amongst other divines had misconducted himself with divers women in the churches. Christian orthodoxy, without inquiring into the true reason of Bodo's change in belief, had a ready answer to give, viz., that Satan, the enemy of mankind and of the church, had led him to it. Bodo journeyed from Rome to Spain without touching France and the court, in order to formally become a Jew. With this object he severed himself from his fatherland, his position, and his friends. He was circumcised in Saragossa, assumed the name of Eleazar, and let his beard grow (August, 938). He married a Jewess in Saragossa, and appears to have entered the military service of an Arab prince. He now conceived such a hatred against his former co-religionists, that he persuaded the Mahometan conqueror not to tolerate a single Christian in his land, but to compel them to adopt either Islam or Judaism. Thereupon the Spanish Christians are

said to have sought help from the Emperor of France, and to have begged the bishops to use their utmost endeavours to rid themselves of this dangerous apostate. The Emperor Louis felt Bodo's conversion very deeply. He did not, however, allow the Jews to suffer on account of his grief, but continued to protect them against injustice. Of this we have a clear proof from his conduct in reference to a certain lawsuit which appears to have come under his notice some months after Bodo's conversion. It is probable that the idea of the emperor being the natural patron of the Jews, and they, being to some extent his clients, must not be injured, originated with Louis the Pious. This idea is noticeable throughout the Middle Ages, and was doubtlessly at first propagated with the best intentions.

With the death of the Emperor Louis, the golden age of the Jews in the Frankish dominions was interrupted for a considerable time. Southern Europe, disturbed by anarchy, and ruled by a fanatic clergy, did not offer a favourable field for the development of Judaism. It is true that Charles the Bald, the son of Louis by Judith (through whom so much confusion arose in the Frankish dominions, that the subsequent division of the kingdom into France, Germany, Lorraine, and Italy ensued), was not hostile to the Jews (843): He appears, indeed, to have inherited from his mother a certain preference for Judaism. He had a Jewish physician, Zedekiah, to whom he was much attached; a Jewish favourite Judah, whom he called his confidant.

Zedekiah's skill in medicine was regarded as magic and the work of the devil by the ignorant and superstitious people. Under Charles the Bald, as under his predecessor, the Jews enjoyed equal rights with the Christians. They were allowed to carry on their business unhindered, and also to possess landed property. Some of them controlled

the tolls. But they had implacable enemies among the higher clergy. They had provoked the dignitaries of the church all too much by their humiliation of Agobard. These, however, though they spoke constantly of love and kindness, would not allow the Jews to enjoy their position in peace.

The bitterest enemy of the Jews was Agobard's pupil and successor, the Bishop Amolo of Lyons. He had learnt from his master to hate the Jews, and he was not alone in this, for Hinkmar, the Bishop of Rheims, a favourite of the Emperor Charles, the Archbishop of Sens and Bourges, and others of the clergy shared his anti-Jewish sentiments. In a council held by these prelates at Meaux (not far from Paris) in 849, for the double purpose, on the one hand of limiting the power of the king and of exalting the spiritual power, and on the other of repressing the riotous living of many clergymen, it was resolved to bring into force again the old canonical laws and restrictions upon the Jews, and to have them confirmed by Charles. How far these restrictions were to extend, those who were assembled did not clearly lay down. But as in the case of Agobard, a long list of complaints was made against the Jews and laid before the emperor. All these were of a hateful description, and were carried back to the time of the first Christian Emperor Constantine. In this list was mentioned the decree of the Emperor Theodosius II., in accordance with which no Jew was allowed to occupy any office or position of honour. The decrees of the council, and the edict of the Merovingian king Childibert, were also cited, by which the Jews could not occupy the positions of judges and farmers of taxes, could not show themselves in the streets during Easter week, and were required to pay the utmost respect to the clergy. They appealed to the synodal decrees which had been passed outside France, but had not become law, and also to the inhuman West

Gothic synodal decrees which seem to have been less hostile to the Jews themselves than to baptised Jews who still clung to Judaism. The members of the council also mentioned the West Gothic synodal decree, which prescribed that the children of converted Jews should be torn away from their parents and placed amongst Christians. In conclusion, they laid stress upon the point that Jewish and Christian slave dealers should be compelled to sell heathen slaves within Christian territory, so as to have them converted to Christianity.

The prelates however had miscalculated. Charles was not so humbled as to allow laws to be dictated to him by a fanatic and ambitious clergy. Although his favourite, Hinkmar, took part in the council, he had the meeting dissolved. Later on, however, he summoned them again for a new church assembly under his own supervision (14 Feb., 846). Its ostensible object was to consider the improvement of church affairs. They had to omit three quarters of the eighty decrees of the council of Meaux, and amongst them the proposal of Jewish restrictions. The position of the Jews in France, whether under the Carolingians or later rulers, was never unfavourable. Charles' heaviest imposition upon the Jewish merchants consisted in their having to pay a tax of eleven per cent. on all merchandise, whilst the Christians had only to pay ten per cent.

Amolo and his colleagues could not endure the defeat they had received at the council of Meaux, and especially regretted that their plan to humble the Jews was frustrated. Agobard's successor sent a letter to the spiritual authorities, reminding them that they ought to use their influence with the princes to deprive the Jews of all their privileges. Amolo's letter, full of virulence and calumny against the Jewish race, is a worthy appendix to Agobard's letter to the Emperor Louis on the

same subject. Much therein is borrowed, and it contains little of historic importance. Towards the end of his letter Amolo expresses his deep regret that the Jews in France enjoyed the rights of free speech, and that many Christians were employed by them. The Jews were even allowed to have Christian servants to work in their houses and fields. Many Christians, too, openly declared that the sermons of the Jewish preachers pleased them better than those of the Christian clergy, as though it were the fault of the Jews that the Christian clergy could not attract their audiences. He also reproached the Jews with the fact that a noble divine had gone over to Judaism and thoroughly hated Christianity. Amolo invited several bishops of the country to do their utmost to bring about the reintroduction of the old canonic restrictions against the Jews. He enumerated a number of anti-Jewish princes and councils, who had insisted on the legal humiliation of the Jews, just as Agobard and the members of the council of Meaux had done before. Amolo, above all, reminded them of the pious West Gothic King, Sisebut, who had forced the Jews to adopt Christianity. "We dare not," ends his malignant letter, "either through our complacency, flattery, or defence, protect the Jews who have been condemned, but who have misunderstood their condemnation."

At the time, Amolo's virulent letter had as little effect against the Jews as Agobard's letter and the decree of the council of Meaux. But gradually the poison spread from the clergy to the people and princes. The division of France into small independent states, which refused allegiance to the king, contributed to leave the Jews at the mercy of the fanatical clergy and the tyranny of petty princes.

The persecution of the French clergy went so far that the then Bishop of Beziers roused the Christians

through vehement sermons from Palm Sunday till the second day of Easter to avenge themselves on the Jews of this town, because they had crucified Jesus. The fanatical mob thus incited armed themselves with stones to attack the Jews. The mischief was repeated year after year for centuries. The Jews of Belziers often defended themselves, and on these occasions much physical injury was inflicted on both sides. The Jews of Toulouse, too, for a long time had to suffer numerous indignities. The counts of this town had the privilege of publicly giving the president of the Jewish community a box on the ears on Good Friday. This was no doubt meant as vengeance upon the Jews for Jesus' death; no doubt too in fulfilment of the precept, "Thou shalt love thine enemies." There is a story which tells of a chaplain called Hugh, who begged that he might be allowed to perform the office, and he dealt the unlucky president so violent a blow, that he fell lifeless to the ground. Those who wished to find a justification for this barbarity alleged that the Jews either had the intention or the desire of betraying the town of Toulouse to the Mahometans. Later, the box on the ears was commuted to an annual money payment by the Jews. The great grandson of Louis the Pious, Louis II., son of Lothaire, was so influenced by the clergy, that as soon as he had the supreme government of Italy in his own hands (855), he decreed that all the Italian Jews should quit the land where their ancestors had lived long before the arrival of the Germans and Longobards. No Jew should dare to show himself after the 1st of October of that year. Any Jew that appeared in the street might be seized and peremptorily handed over for punishment. Fortunately for the Jews this decree could not be carried out; for Italy was then divided into small districts, whose chiefs for the most part

refused allegiance to the Emperor of Italy. Mahometans made frequent irruptions into the land, and were often called in to help the Christian prince against each other, or against the king. In this anarchy the Jews were comparatively safe, and the decree remained in abeyance.

Under Charles' successors, when the power of the king became more insignificant, and the bigotry of the princes increased, things came to such a pass that Charles the Simple gave over all the lands and vineyards of the Jews in the Duchy of Narbonne to the church of that place in order to show his great zeal for his religion (899—914). The French princes gradually accustomed themselves to think that the protection which the Emperors Charles the Great and his son Louis afforded the Jews involved the inference that the protected belonged to the protector both in person and property. This thought, at least, lies at the bottom of the act by which the usurper Boso, King of Burgundy and Provence, who was greatly influenced by the clergy, presented the Jews as a gift to the Church, *i.e.*, he considered them in every respect as his bondsmen. This arbitrary treatment of the Jews only came to an end with the rule of the Capets.

Like their brethren in Western Europe, the Jews in the East, under the Byzantine dominion, had to suffer sad persecution. Despite forced baptism, and the oppression of the Emperor Leo the Isaurian, the Jews again spread themselves over the whole Byzantine Empire, *viz.*, in Asia Minor and Greece. Many Grecian Jews occupied themselves with the cultivation of mulberry trees and silk spinning. The Greek Jews in other respects were subject to all the restrictions of the late emperor, and were as little allowed to hold office as heathens and heretics. They however possessed religious freedom. Basilus, who ascended the throne about

850, did not belong to the worst Byzantine rulers, but was comparatively just and mild. Yet he was resolved to bring the Jews over to Christianity. He therefore arranged that religious discussions should take place between Jewish and Christian clergymen, and decreed that the Jews should either irrefutably prove their religion to be the true one, or confess that "Jesus was the culminating point of the Law and of the prophets."

Basilus, foreseeing that these discussions would probably lead to no results, promised appointments of honour to those who should prove themselves open to conversion. What was to be the penalty of those who objected is not known, but they doubtless had to suffer severe persecution.

Many Jews taking advantage of this opportunity went over to Christianity, or acted as though they believed in it. Scarcely was Basilus dead (886), when they threw off the mask as they had done in Spain, France, and in other countries where they had been oppressed, and returned to the religion to which in reality they had never for a moment been unfaithful. But they had made a mistake. Basilus' son and successor, Leo the Philosopher—a title cheaply purchased in those times—even excelled his father in intolerance. He decreed that those who had re-adopted the Jewish customs should be treated as apostates, and punished with death (about 900). Nevertheless, after the death of this emperor, the Jews, as they had done after the death of Leo the Isaurian, continued to live in the Byzantine Empire.

In the lands of the Caliphate, viz., in Babylonia (Iraq), where the vital blow was struck against the Jewish race, the Jews gradually lost the favourable position which they had hitherto enjoyed, although the intolerance of the Mahometan ruler was mild compared with that of the Christian prince. Here they were the prey of arbitrary treatment, for the Caliphs resigned their power in favour of the vizirs,

and thus deprived themselves of all power. The Caliphs after Al-Mamun became more and more the tool of ambitious and greedy ministers and generals, and the Oriental Jews had frequently to buy the favour of these temporary lords at a high price. The Caliph Al-Mutavakkil, Al-Mamun's third successor, renewed the laws of Omar against the Jews, Christians, and Magi, and compelled them to wear a characteristic dress, a yellow scarf over their dress, and a thick cord instead of a girdle. He, moreover, changed their synagogues into mosques, and forbade the Mahometans to teach Jews and Christians, or to admit them to offices (849-856). A tenth part of their property had to be given to the Caliph; they were forbidden to ride upon horses, and were only allowed to make use of asses and mules (853-854). The Exilarchs lost a part of their power, when Al-Mamun decreed that they should no longer be officially recognised and supported, and they lost still more through the fanaticism of Al-Mutavakkil. In course of time these restrictions were abolished, and the Exilarchs were again admitted to a certain amount of power, but they had to content themselves with the positions which the communities gave them out of old and endearing remembrances.

As the Exilarchate declined the more did the respect increase for the School of Pumbaditha, because it was near to Bagdad, the capital of the Caliphate, and the Jewish communities including many influential men, came under its jurisdiction. Pumbaditha now rose from the subordinate position into which it had been forced. It took an equal footing with the sister academy of Sora, and its presidents likewise assumed the title of Gaon. It next made itself independent of the Exilarchate. Whereas formerly the head of the school and the college of Pumbaditha had to go once a year to pay homage to the Exilarch, the order was now

reversed. If the Exilarch wished to hold a public assembly he had to repair to Pumbaditha. This was probably brought about by the chief of the school Paltoi ben Abayi (842-858), who heads the list of important Geonim. He wished to employ the Cherem (Excommunication) without any restriction.

Dissensions about the succession to the Gaonate were not wanting during this period, although the Exilarchs could not make their influence felt.

A contemporary Gaon of Sora, Natronai II., son of Hillai (859-869), kept up a prolific correspondence with foreign communities in the Arabic language. His predecessors had employed a mixture of Hebrew and Chaldee as the medium of their communications. Natronai II. also corresponded with the Judæo-Spanish community at Lucena, who doubtless understood Arabic better than Hebrew. He energetically opposed the Karaites just as the Geonim had done at the time of the rise of this sect, "because they despised the words of the sages of the Talmud, and set up for themselves a peculiar, arbitrary Talmud of their own." His pupil and successor, Mar-Amram ben Sheshna (869-881), was the compiler of the liturgical order of prayers in use amongst European Jews. At the request of a Spanish community, through the interposition of their religious leader, Isaac ben Simeon, he collected together everything that the Talmud and the custom of the Schools had ratified concerning prayer and divine service (Siddur Rab Amram), and arranged it in the order which the progress of time had perfected. This arrangement was considered permanent. Everyone that deviated from it was considered a heretic, and excluded from the community of Israel. The poetical compositions for the festivals were not yet in general use at this time, but the selection was left to the taste of the reader.

During Mar Amram's Gaonate, there were two successive heads of the schools in Pumbaditha, Rabba ben Ami (869-872), of whom nothing further is known, and Mar Zemach I. ben Paltoi (872-90) who heads the list of literary Geonim. Hitherto, the leaders of the School had occupied themselves with the exposition of the Talmud, with the regulation of the internal affairs of the communities, and with answering questions which were submitted to them. The one or the other of them, it is true, made a collection of Agadic sayings, but as regards literary activity, they had either no leisure or opportunity, or no inclination for it. But when the zeal for the study of the Talmud increased in the various communities in Egypt, Africa, Spain, and France, and students of the Talmud spent their time in studying obscure and difficult passages, they had often to appeal to the Schools for the solution of their difficulties. Their questions took such a theoretical form, that the Geonim found it necessary to write treatises on certain portions of the Talmud, instead of simple and short answers. These books were used by students as Talmudical handbooks. The Gaon Zemach ben Paltoi, of Pumbaditha, arranged an alphabetical index of difficult words in the Talmud, under the title of "Aruch." In it he shows an acquaintance with the Persian language. This dictionary forms the first contribution to the ever-growing department of Talmudical lexicography. The second literary Gaon was Nachshon ben Zadok of Sora (881-89), Zemach's contemporary. He, too, wrote a book giving explanations of difficult words in the Talmud. Nachshon made himself famous through his discovery of a key to the Jewish calendar, viz., that the order of the years and festivals repeat themselves after a cycle of two hundred and forty-seven years, and that the form of the years could be arranged in fourteen tables. This key is named

after him, and is known as the cycle of Rabbi Nachshon.

The third author of this time was Rabbi Simon from Cairo, or Misr, in Egypt, who, although not an official of the Babylonian School, was yet in a position to compose a code embracing all religious and ceremonial laws (about 900). This work bears the title "The Great Halachas" (Halachot gedolot), and forms a supplement to Jehudai's work of a similar nature directed against the Karaites. The history of the post-Exilic period till the destruction of the Temple was also written at this time; its author is unknown. It is written in Arabic, and is based partly upon Josephus, partly upon the Apocrypha, and partly upon tradition. It is called "The History of the Maccabees" or "Joseph ben Gorion." In later times an Italian translated it into Hebrew, and in its expanded form it bears the title Josippon (Pseudo-Josephus). This work, though not based on the original sources of Jewish history, yet served to awaken the interest of the Jews in their glorious history.

The literary activity of the official heads of Judaism in the two Schools spread to the other members of the Talmudic circles. They had no idea of scientific research, and would have condemned this in fact as a leaning to Karaite doctrine. Outside the Gaonate in Egypt and Kairuan there was a scientific movement among the Rabbanites, weak at first, but increasing in strength every year, as though the Rabbanite thinkers felt that as long as Talmudic Judaism took up a hostile position towards science, it could not hold its place against the Karaites. Biblical exegesis and Hebrew philology formed the special studies of the Karaites, and in connection with it they developed a kind of philosophy, though only as an auxiliary science. It was in this branch that, towards the end of the ninth century, several Rabbanites

emulated them. Famous amongst these was Isaac ben Suleiman Israeli (845-940). He was physician, philosopher, and Hebrew philologist. He was an Egyptian, and was called to Kairuan about the year 904 to be physician to the last Aghlabite prince, Ziadeth-Allah. Isaac Israeli entered his service and enjoyed his full favour until the founder of the Fatimidic dynasty, Ubaid-Allah, the messianic Imam (Almadi, who was said to have been the son of a Jewess), conquered the Aghlabite prince, and founded a great kingdom in Africa (909-933). Israeli had a great reputation as a physician, and had many pupils. At the request of the Caliph Ubaid-Allah he wrote eight medical works, the best of which is said to be that on fever. His medical writings were translated into Hebrew, Latin, and part of them into Spanish, and were zealously studied by many doctors. A Christian physician, the founder of the Salernian school of medicine, plagiarised and took credit for Israeli's works. Isaac Israeli was an important contributor to the development of medical science, but as a philosopher he did not effect much. His work on "Definitions and Descriptions" scarcely shows the rudiments of philosophical knowledge.

His lectures must have made a greater impression upon his hearers than his writings. He instructed two disciples, a Mahometan, Abu-Jafar Ibn-Aljezar, who is recognised as an authority in medicine; and a Jew, Dunash ben Tamim, who worked in the spirit of his master. Isaac Israeli lived to be more than 100 years old, and survived his patron the Caliph Ubaid-Allah, who accelerated his death through neglecting the advice of his Jewish physician. When Isaac Israeli died, about 940, the way was opened for a scientific method of which future generations made use through the example of an important personage.

Whilst the Rabbanites first made the attempt to

create a scientific method, the Karaites stumbled on the broad beaten path of the Mutazilitic philosophy. Whilst yet young, Karaism already showed signs of advanced old age. All its strength was given to Biblical exposition, combined with philology, but even here it made no progress. In the central community of the Karaites in Jerusalem it assumed an ascetic character. Sixty Karaites banded and left their homes, their property and their families, lived in community, abstained from wine and meat, went poorly clad, and spent their time in fasting and prayer. They adopted this mode of living, as they said, with the object of promoting Israel's redemption. They called themselves the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem (Abelé Zion), and every one of them added to his signature the term "The Mourner." It was through them that the religious life of the Karaites received an ascetic tinge. They not alone observed the Levitical laws of purity in the strictest manner, but they even shunned intercourse with non-Jews, from whom they would not buy bread nor use the things they had touched. The further the Karaites carried this severity the more they looked upon the Rabbanites as reprobates and sinners, whose houses it was a sin to visit. The Karaites gradually spread from Babylonia and Judæa to Egypt on the one side and to Syria on the other, and northwards as far as the Crimea. There were large Karaite communities in Alexandria and Cairo, and also in the Crimea, in the Bosphorus (Kertch), Sulchat and Kaffa (Theodosia). The zeal of individuals contributed much to spread Karaism, which by means of disputations, sermons, and letters endeavoured to secure followers amongst the Rabbanites. Like every other radically-weak sect the Karaites relied upon propaganda as though numbers could atone for internal weakness. There was amongst them a certain proselytiser, a

cunning man, Eldad by name, who related wonderful adventures, and made a great stir in his day. Eldad's romantic travels throw a lurid light upon the Jewish history of the time. He belongs to that class of deceivers who have a pious end in view, and who know how to profit by the credulity of the masses through a plausible web of falsehood. The Geonim themselves were almost deceived into believing his pretended traditions, which he affirmed had been received direct from Moses.

Meanwhile, the institution to which the reminiscences of the former political independence of Judaism had attached itself was soon to be dissolved. The Exilarchate fell into disregard through the rivalry of the School of Pumbaditha, and also lost the revenue which served as its mainstay. Even though questions from abroad continued to be directed to the Geonim of Sora, the sister academy was considered even in Babylonia to be the chief authority, and to have the most influence. This influence was increased still more through the choice as Gaon of Pumbaditha of Hai ben David (890-97), who had hitherto held the post of Rabbi and Judge in the capital of the Caliphate. It was just at this time, at the end of the 9th century, that the Jews again enjoyed a high position in the Caliphate, under the Caliph Al-Mutadhid (892-902). His vizir and regent Ubaid-Allah Ibn-Suleiman appointed Jews and Christians alike to state offices.

The community of Bagdad gained the most through the favour shown to the Jews by the vizir. Now that Hai had occupied his post in the capital for a long time, and had made himself popular in the community, he was elected Gaon of Pumbaditha by the influential members. Their object was to make the School of Pumbaditha of greater importance. His successors, who like himself had commenced their career with the Rabbinate of Bagdad, worked in the same spirit, and were assisted by the

powerful members of the community. The School of Sora sank even deeper for this very reason. The chief of the School of Pumbaditha desired to make it the centre of the Babylonian community and of Judaism generally, and to put an end to the Exilarchate as well as to the School of Sora. This man, Mar Kohen-Zedek II. b. Joseph (held office 917-936), was passionate and energetic, and was one of those who, free from personal selfishness, seek the increase of power for the community, regardless of other duties. As soon as he entered office, Kohen-Zedek demanded that the School of Pumbaditha should have the greater share of the revenue which was contributed by the various communities. He based his demand upon the fact, that the pupils of the college of Pumbaditha were more numerous than those of Sora, and therefore deserved greater consideration. So many quarrels arose between the two Schools in consequence of this demand that several important people found it necessary to interfere. A compromise was made, and it was agreed that in future the money should be equally divided. Kohen-Zedek gained so much that the academy of Sora lost the last trace of its superiority. Kohen-Zedek then endeavoured, in concert with the Exilarchate, to make its remnant of power still smaller. The Exilarch Ukba was a man who was endowed with an Arabic education, and who could write poems in Arabic. Kohen-Zedek demanded that the appointment of judges in the communities of Chorasán should be vested in, and the revenues derived from the same, should be devoted to the School of Pumbaditha. Ukba would not give up any portion of his dignity, and appealed to the Caliph. But Kohen-Zedek had friends at Bagdad, who had influence at court, and these effected that the Caliph Al-Muktadir (908-932), or rather the vizir Ibn Furat, since the Caliph spent his time in riotous living, deprived Mar-Ukba of his

post, and banished him from Bagdad. The Exilarch went to Karmisin (Kermanshah, east of Bagdad), and Kohen-Zedek rejoiced that the Exilarchate was now destroyed. The weak president of Sora, Jacob ben Natronai, permitted all these events without interfering.

Meanwhile matters took a favourable turn for the banished Exilarch, by which he was able to frustrate the plans of Kohen-Zedek. Just at this time there came to Kermanshah the young and pleasure-seeking Caliph. On his walks the banished Exilarch Ukba frequently greeted and praised him in well-measured Arabic verses. His verses pleased Al-Muktadir's secretary so well that he thought it worth his while to call the attention of the Caliph to the variety of thoughts he was able to introduce into the single theme of "allegiance."

Poetry was prized so much amongst the Arabs, that no conqueror, however uncouth, was insensible to it. Al-Muktadir sent for the poetical Exilarch, was pleased with him, and finally asked him what favour he could do for him. Ukba wished for nothing more eagerly than to be restored to his office. This the Caliph granted him. He now returned to Bagdad, to the astonishment of his opponent, after a year's absence, and reassumed his high position (918). Poetry had saved him. Kohen-Zedek and his party, however, did not allow him to enjoy his triumph for long. Through bribery and intrigue they effected his deposition for the second time, and he was again banished. In order that he might not again be restored to favour, he was exiled beyond the territory of the Eastern Caliph, to the recently founded kingdom of the Fatimids—to Kairuan in Africa. Here, where the physician and philosopher, Isaac Israeli, was greatly respected, he was received with open arms, and held in high esteem. The community of Kairuan treated him as Exilarch, built a raised place for him

in the synagogue, and caused him to forget the troubles he had suffered in the land of his fathers (919).

Kohen-Zedek had been attacking the Exilarchate rather than Ukba personally; he now took care that no successor should be appointed to the Exilarchate, which he desired to extinguish. His contemporary Gaon in Sora, Jacob ben Natronai, was either too weak or too embarrassed to interfere. So the office of Exilarch was left vacant for a year or two. During this time, when both the Exilarchate and the president of the school were equally hated, the people were yet attached to the house of David through custom and reminiscences. They clamoured for the restoration of the office. Thereupon the Gaon of Sora took courage and would no longer remain a weak tool in the hands of Kohen-Zedek. The people vehemently demanded that David ben Zaccai, a relative of Ukba, should be made Exilarch, and the whole college of the School of Sora paid homage to him in Kasr, where he lived (921). Kohen-Zedek and the college of Pumbaditha refused to recognise him. David ben Zaccai was as resolute and ambitious as his opponent, and determined to assert his authority. By virtue of his power, he deposed Kohen-Zedek, and named his successor. Once more complications arose within the School of Pumbaditha, which were painful to the better class amongst the people. The contention between the Exilarchate and Gaonate, which penetrated the Judæo-Babylonian community, lasted nearly two years.

Nissi Naharvani, a blind man, who was respected by everybody for his piety, and who felt regret at this state of affairs, undertook to effect a reconciliation. Late one night he groped about till he found his way to the room of Kohen-Zedek, who was astonished at the sudden appearance of the

worthy blind man at such an hour, and was persuaded by him to become reconciled; Nissi then also induced the Exilarch to yield. David and Kohen-Zedek met, with their respective followers, in Sarsar, (half-a-day's journey south of Bagdad), made peace, and Kohen-Zedek accompanied the Exilarch as far as Bagdad (Spring, 921). David in turn recognised Kohen-Zedek as the legitimate Gaon of Pumbaditha. Kohen-Zedek, who had not succeeded in his plan to extinguish the Exilarchate, yet lived to see the School of Sora, which had been humbled by him, rise again from its low position, and receive fresh splendour by means of a stranger from a foreign land; it even cast the School of Pumbaditha into the shade for several years.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF JEWISH SCIENCE : SAADIAH AND CHASDAI.

Judaism in the Tenth Century—Saadiah, the Founder of Religious Philosophy—Translation of the Bible into Arabic—Saadiah opposes Karaism—The Karaite Solomon ben Yerucham—The School at Sora and Saadiah—Saadiah retires from Sora—His Literary Activity—Extinction of the Exilarchate—Sahal and other Karaite writers—Jews in Spain—The School at Cordova—Dunash ben Tamim—Chasdai—His services to Judaism—Mena-chem ben Saruk—Chasdai and the King of the Chazars.

928—970 C.E.

THE last spark of spiritual life was extinguished in Christian Europe with the decay of the Carolingian rule. The darkness of the Middle Ages became thicker and thicker, but the spiritual light of Judaism shone forth in all its splendour.

The Church was the seat of monastic ignorance and barbarity, the synagogue was the place of science and civilisation. In Christianity every scientific effort was condemned as the work of Satan by the officials of the Church as well as by the people; in Judaism the leaders and teachers of religion themselves promoted science, and endeavoured to elevate the people. Far from condemning knowledge, the Geonim considered it as an aid and supplement to religion. For three centuries the teachers of Judaism were for the most part devotees of science, for which a solid basis was laid during this epoch. Two men especially, one in the east and the other in the west, made science a principle of Judaism. They were the Gaon Saadiah and the statesman Chasdai.

With them begins a new period of Jewish history,

which we may confidently call the scientific epoch. The spring-time of Israel's history returned, and in its pure atmosphere the sweet voice of poetry again made itself heard. Contemporary writers scarcely noticed that a remnant of Jewish antiquity, the Exilarchate, was now at an end. The past, however, was soon forgotten in the new life that had just made itself visible. Just as the Temple was originally the centre of religious life, so now its place was taken by the temple of learning on the banks of the Euphrates, where religion formed a new centre for itself. The first half of the tenth century is a characteristic epoch in the development of Judaism, and was mainly the outcome of favourable circumstances.

Jewish history was gradually transferred to European ground. Judaism assumed, so to speak, a European character, and deviated more and more from its oriental form. Saadiah was the last important link in its development in the East, Chasdai and the scientific men whom he influenced the first bearers of a Judæo-European culture.

Saadiah (Arabic, Said) ben Joseph, from the town Fayum in Upper Egypt (892—942), was the founder of scientific Judaism amongst the Rabbanites, and the creator of religious philosophy in the Middle Ages. He was a man of extensive knowledge and combined in himself the learning of the time, which he drew from Mahometan and Karaite sources, and worked up with Talmudic elements. More remarkable even than his knowledge was his whole personality, permeated as it was by a religious spirit and deep moral earnestness. He had a decided character, and belonged to those who know how to give account of their actions, and how to persevere in carrying out what they think right. Little is known of his youth. There were few great Talmudical scholars in Egypt at that time, and the fact that Saadiah became famous in this branch of

literature speaks well for his spiritual power. He was more at home in the Karaite literature than previous Rabbanites had been. In his twenty-third year (913) he made a fierce attack upon the Karaites, which was felt by them for centuries afterwards. He wrote a book "In Refutation of Anan." The contents of this book are unknown, but it is probable that Saadiah attempted to prove in it the necessity of tradition, and also to expose Anan's inconsistencies. He adduced seven arguments in proof of the necessity of tradition, which, weak as they are, were afterwards recognised for the most part by the Karaites. He wrote another book in which he showed the absurdity of the boundless extension of relationship in the Karaite law. He characterised Anan as "an ambitious man, who possessed too much boldness and too little fear of God," and who rejected Talmudic Judaism only as a means of avenging a personal slight.

Before he had arrived at maturity he undertook a heavy task fraught with important consequences for Judaism. Hitherto, the Karaites had taken the Scriptural text under their special care, whereas the Rabbanite teachers had, to a certain extent, neglected it. They did so because they considered the Talmud as of greater importance for religious life.

The Karaites had already composed numerous expositions of the Bible, the Rabbanites but few. Saadiah, who felt this want, undertook to translate the Bible into Arabic, the language most widely understood at this time, for it was spoken from the extreme West to districts far beyond India. To this translation he added notes for three reasons:—1st, he wished to make the Bible accessible to the people; 2ndly, he thought thereby to oppose Karaism, which sought to refute Talmudic Judaism through its exegesis. Finally, he wished to remove the mis-conception of the

people and the perversity of the mystics, who rendered the words in the Bible literally, and thereby gave an unworthy description of the God-head. He favoured the philosophical idea which describes God in His exaltedness as a spirit. His translation was intended to be made agreeably both to reason and Talmudical tradition. This was the basis of his view of Judaism. Teachings of the Talmud are as divine as those of the Bible, though neither the Bible nor tradition should be contrary to reason. According to Saadiah the contradictions are only on the surface, and he sought by his translation and exposition to remove this illusion. To carry out this aim he adopted interpretations of the text, which were arbitrary and forced.

Saadiah made use of Arabic characters which were seldom employed by the Jews who wrote Arabic. He did this because he also wrote for Mahometan readers. Although Saadiah shows great mental power and independence in his translation, his renderings cannot be highly praised. The very fact that he does not allow the text to speak its own language, and that he wished to find at one time the Talmudical tradition at another a philosophical meaning in the words and context of the sentences, necessarily prevented him from giving a true exposition. He impressed the exegesis of scripture into the service of tradition and of the philosophy of the time, and made the text imply more than the meaning of the words allowed. At the same time as he wrote his translation Saadiah composed a kind of Hebrew grammar in the Arabic language. He also composed a Hebrew lexicon (in Hebrew, *Iggaron*). Even here he often missed the truth as to the grammar and etymology of the words. His exegetical and grammatical works are in so far of importance as they broke fresh ground in Rabbanite studies, and introduced exegesis and

philology in their fullest extent as new departments. Even his mistakes proved instructive in later times.

In his exposition of the first book of the Pentateuch Saadiah again quarrelled with the Karaites. The dispute arose out of his endeavour to prove that the Karaite calendar was not in accordance with Scripture. In his attack upon Karaism he had disturbed a hornets' nest, and aroused a host of opponents against him. The Karaites had hitherto waged war against Talmudic Judaism without opposition. They were, therefore, very displeased when a Rabbanite, endowed with intellect and knowledge, entered the lists against them. A lively contest arose, which was in so far useful that it awakened scientific interest. Saadiah's chief opponent was the Karaite Solomon ben Yerucham (Ruchaïm). This Karaite (born in Fostat in 885, died 960), who lived in Palestine, was only a few years older than Saadiah, and did not rise above the mediocrity of his contemporaries. He was of a violent and acrid nature, and imagined that he could settle scientific questions by scoffing and abuse. When he returned from Palestine to Egypt, and perceived the impression that Saadiah's written and oral attacks upon Karaism had made even in Karaite circles, he was filled with rage against the young and spirited Rabbanite author, and took upon himself to write a double refutation—in Hebrew for the educated, and in Arabic for the masses generally. In his Hebrew polemic, which consists of eighteen doggerel verses alphabetically arranged (*Milchamot*), he treats Saadiah as a child. The whole work breathes nothing but slander and coarseness. In fact, the Karaite polemic writings generally deserve consideration more on account of the method in which they seek to explain away their mistakes than on account of their contents or

their form. Saadiah's composition took the shape of a letter to the Karaite communities in Egypt.

Ben-Yerucham was not the only Karaite who sought to defend the sect against Saadiah's attacks. The various writers vied with one another in the fierceness of their attacks upon the young Rabbanite by whom the existence of their anti-Talmudic opinions was threatened with destruction. If the Karaite authors thought to silence Saadiah by means of abuse they were mistaken. He refuted their arguments, maintained his accusations, and was always on the alert to take up arms. He wrote two other polemics against Karaism in Arabic, the one "Distinction" (Tamgiz), and one against Ibn Sakviyah, who had entered the lists in the cause of the Karaites. The fame of Saadiah spread as far as the communities of the African and Eastern Caliphate through his works. The venerable Isaac Israeli, read his writings with avidity, and his pupil, Dunash ben Tamim, even excelled him in this respect. Saadiah's fame reached the seat of the Gaonate; the attention of the leaders was directed to him.

The School of Sora, was by no means in a flourishing condition, and was so deficient in learned men, that the Exilarch David ben Zaccai found it necessary to invest a man, Yom-Tob Kahana ben Jacob by name, with the honour of Gaon. He was a weaver by trade, and died in his second year of office (926-928). The Gaon of Pumbaditha, Kohen-Zedek, who did his best to give the exclusive authority to his school, made an agreement with the Exilarch, to whom he had become reconciled, to close the school of Sora, to transplant the members to Pumbaditha, and to appoint a titular Gaon of Sora, who should have his seat in Pumbaditha. The son of a Gaon, named Nathan ben Yehudai, was invested with this

titular dignity, but he died suddenly. His sudden death seems to have been taken by the contemporaries as a sign of evil omen. The Exilarch David then determined to fill up the vacancy and to restore the ancient school at Sora. He had two candidates in view; Saadiah, and another unknown, Zemach ben Shahin, of old nobility. The Exilarch appealed to the blind Nissi Naharvani to assist him in his choice. His advice was the more disinterested as he himself declined the honour. Nissi voted for Zemach, not that he had any personal dislike to Saadiah; on the contrary, he manifested much love for him. "Saadiah surpasses all his contemporaries in wisdom, piety, and eloquence," he said of him, "but he is very independent, and shrinks from nothing." Nissi feared this inflexibility, which he rightly estimated when he perceived that with slight provocation Saadiah would be at variance with the Exilarch. Nevertheless, David decided for Saadiah. He was called from Egypt to Sora and formally installed as Gaon (May, 928). It was an exceptional circumstance that a foreigner who had not spent many years in Talmudic schools should, step by step, ascend the ladder of office to the highest honour next to the Exilarchate. Besides, Saadiah was more known for his scientific work than for his Talmudic scholarship. With his call to office, Babylonia to some extent lost the supremacy which for seven centuries it had held over all other lands. This supremacy was now enjoyed by another country, and philosophy was raised to the same level as the Talmud. The spirit of inquiry that had been banished from the halls of the Schools, with Anan the founder of Karaism, made a solemn return into those halls with Saadiah.

Saadiah invested the college of Sora with a new splendour through his character and fame. During his presidency Pumbaditha was thrown into the

shade. He sought to fill up the gaps that had arisen in the academy. He appointed worthy young men to academic offices, and was faithful to his avocation. What must have been his feelings when he entered for the first time the halls of learning where the great authorities of the Amoraïm had taught before him! Soon, however, he no doubt became conscious of the fact that there existed but the smallest remnant of that former greatness, and that the high sounding titles and dignities were but phantasms, and had long since sunk into oblivion. The Exilarchate, the head of the Judæo-Babylonian community, was without intrinsic value, and was constantly at variance with the Schools. Not being officially recognised at court, the Exilarchate only continued to exist through the bribery of the courtiers and rulers for the time being, and was threatened with extinction should its opponents make a higher bid. The respite that had been obtained with difficulty by money was defrayed by forcible exactions from the people. Alike in the Exilarchate and in the academic colleges, corruption and oppression were the order of the day, the only object in view being to maintain the authority of the chiefs. Eloquence, virtue, piety, were wanting in the hearts of the leaders. The Exilarch David once sent his sons to levy an extraordinary contribution from the various communities; and when the congregation at Fars (Hamadan?) refused it, David excommunicated them, denounced them to the Vizir, who accused them before the Caliph, when a heavy fine was imposed upon them. The Geonim had not a word to say against all this! Saadiah himself, however, much as he was above his predecessors, had to be silent; he had not been long enough in office to protest. His bitterest enemies too had just begun to bestir themselves, and waited for his downfall. Not alone was Kohen-Zedek jealous of him because Pumbaditha was thrown into the

shade, but a young man from Bagdad, Aaron (Caleb) Ibn-Sarjadu, learned, rich, and influential, distrusted and opposed him. Saadiah, therefore, remained silent as regards the great defects in the Jewish communal life in Babylonia.

He wished first to be on firmer footing. His sense of right was, however, too seriously wounded, when he was expected to take part in the iniquities of the president of the Jewish community, whose conduct had been immoral. He could not restrain himself, and he exposed him. An unimportant circumstance revealed the moral corruption of the Jewish Babylonian chiefs. There was a lawsuit about a large inheritance, which had not been conscientiously decided by the Exilarch David. His decision was caused by a desire of the great gain that would thus accrue to him. To make his decree legal, and that it might be unimpeachable, David demanded the signatures of the two Geonim to the document that had been drawn up by him. Kohen-Zedek saw no objection to this course, and did as he was asked; Saadiah, however, would not lend his name to a deed of injustice. On being pressed by the parties, he gave the reason of his refusal. The Exilarch David, who had a double interest in obtaining his signature, sent his son Judah to ask him to sign the document without delay. Saadiah calmly replied that the Law forbade him to do such things, as it is said, "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment." Once more David sent his son to Saadiah to threaten him with deposition should he still refuse. Judah at first assumed a quiet demeanour, and solemnly promised Saadiah that no unpleasant consequence should follow. When, however, he found him determined, he raised his hand against Saadiah, and vehemently demanded his signature. Saadiah's servants soon removed Judah, and locked the door of the room. David ben Zaccai, who felt himself insulted, deprived the Gaon of his office.

He excommunicated him and appointed Joseph ben Jacob ben Satia as his successor. He was a young man who might well have been Saadiah's pupil. Saadiah, however, was not the man to be terrified by force. He, in turn, declared David to be no longer Exilarch, and named Josiah Hassan as Prince of the Captivity (930). Two factions immediately arose in Babylonia, the one for Saadiah, the other for David. On Saadiah's side were ranged the various members of the academy of Sora and many respected and learned men of Bagdad, amongst whom were the sons of Netira. Opposed to him were Aaron Ibn-Sarjadu and his party, and probably also Kohen-Zedek and the members of the college of Pumbaditha. Both parties appealed to the Caliph Al-Muktadir, and bribed his favourites and courtiers to bring their patron over to their respective sides. Ibn-Sarjadu spent 10,000 ducats for the object of effecting Saadiah's deposition. The Caliph wished to hear both parties, and ordered a formal trial to take place in Bagdad under the presidency of the Vizir, who was assisted by many important men. The dispute was not settled. This was probably owing to the fact that the Caliph Al-Muktadir was constantly changing his Vizirs during the last two years of his reign, and to the disturbed state of the capital during this time (930—932). Saadiah asserted his authority as Gaon, though there was a rival Gaon in the person of Joseph ben Satia. There were likewise rival Exilarchs, David and his brother Josiah Hassan.

It was only when Al-Muktadir was killed in a rebellion (October, 932), and Kahir, who was so poor that he was obliged to borrow clothes for the ceremony of installation, became Caliph, that David's party, which could pour money into the empty treasury, gained the victory. The Exilarch squandered the money that had been extorted from

the various communities in his endeavours to bring about the downfall of his opponent. Saadiah was soon forbidden by the Caliph to remain president of the school, perhaps also to stay in Sora (commencement of 933). The rival Exilarch Hassan was banished to Chorasán, where he died. Saadiah now lived in retirement for four years (933—37) in Bagdad. His health had suffered severely through the constant quarrels and the annoyance he had received, and he became melancholy. But this did not interfere with his genius. It was during his retirement that his best works were written; these bear the stamp of freshness and originality.

He wrote Talmudic treatises, composed poetical pieces and prayers in prose, which are full of religious fervour. He also arranged a Prayer-book (*Siddur*), after the manner of Amram, and collected the rules of the Calendar (*Ibbur*), and wrote a polemic against the Massorite, Aaron ben Asher, of Tiberias, and was particularly rich in his compositions during this period. The greatest of his works, however, are philosophical, which are embodied in two writings, the one a commentary on the “Book of the Creation” (*Sefer Yezirah*), the other in his magnum opus on Faith and Creeds. Both these works are in Arabic. Saadiah was the first to set up a tolerably complete religious philosophy. The Karaite teachers, it is true, were fond of lengthy philosophical disputations, which they frequently introduced, on most unsuitable occasions, but they were never able to develop a complete and perfect religious system. The Arabs had as yet no systematic philosophy. Saadiah by his own unaided intellectual power, built up a Jewish philosophy of religion, although he borrowed his method of treatment and his philosophic themes from the Arabic Mutazilic school. His composition on the Ten Commandments, in which he strove to bring them into relation with the Ten Categories of the

Aristotelian philosophy, belongs to his earlier and less excellent efforts.

He wrote his work on the philosophy of religion in 934. Its object was to oppose and correct the erroneous views of his contemporaries as to the meaning of Judaism; on the one hand were the opinions of the unbelievers, who degraded it; and on the other, those of the ignorant people, who condemned every reflection on religion as involving a denial of God. "My heart is sad," he writes in the introduction, "by reason of my people, who have an impure belief and a confused representation of their religion. Some deny the truth, clear as daylight though it be, and boast of their unbelief. Others are sunk in the Sea of Doubt, and the waves of error beat together above their own heads, and there is no swimmer strong enough to stem the tide and escape from it. Now that God has given me the capacity of being useful to them, I consider it my duty to lead them to the right path. Should anyone object and ask 'How can we attain a true belief through philosophic thought, when many consider this as heresy and disbelief?' I would reply, Only the stupid do so, and such as believe that everyone who goes to India will become rich, or that the eclipse of the moon arises through a dragon swallowing up the disc of the moon, and similar things. Such people need not trouble us. Suppose, however, that one were to quote the warning of the Talmud against philosophical speculation, 'if anyone searches into the mystery of eternity and space such a person does not deserve to live,' we should reply that the Talmud could not have discouraged right thinking, since Scripture encourages us to it. The warning of the sages was only intended to keep us from that one-sided speculation which does not carry with it the truth of Scripture. Groundless speculation can only give rise to error, and should it even eventu-

ally lead to truth, it has no firm foundation, because it rejects revelation, and puts doubt in its place. But when philosophy works hand in hand with faith, it cannot mislead us. It confirms revelation, and is in a position to refute the objections that are made by unbelief. The truth of revealed Judaism can be premised, since it was confirmed through visible signs and miracles. Should, however, someone object that if speculation carries with it the same conviction as revelation, the latter would be superfluous, since human reason could arrive at the truth without the divine interposition, I should reply that revelation is necessary, inasmuch as, without it, mankind would have to go a long way round to get to the clear truth through their own reflections. A thousand accidents and doubts might hinder their progress. God, therefore, sent His messengers to us in order to save us all this trouble. We might thus have a knowledge of Him direct, confirmed by miracles."

Unbelief had already made such progress in the Eastern Caliphate, in consequence of the teachings of the Mutazilic school of philosophy, that an Arabic poet, Abul-Ala, a contemporary of Saadiah, who had scourged the weaknesses of his time, could say "Moslems, Jews, Christians and Magi are steeped in error and superstition. The world is divided into two classes, those that have intelligence but no belief, and those that believe but have no understanding." In Jewish circles, many already began to criticise the responses of the Geonim, and no longer looked upon them as oracular utterances. This criticism was not restricted to the decisions of the Geonim or even to the Talmud, but extended its doubts to the trustworthiness of the Bible, or even to the fact of Revelation.

The height of unbelief at this time was centred in the Rabbanite Chivi Albalchi from the town Balch in ancient Bactria. Chivi wrote a work

against the Bible and revelation, in which he propounded two hundred objections against them. Some of these objections are of the same kind as those that are even now used by opponents of the Bible. Chivi was the first Rationalist who was thoroughly consistent. And yet he had followers in his time. Youthful teachers spread his heretical views in the schools. In order to oppose Chivi's unorthodox opinions, the opponents, Saadiah and Solomon ben Yerucham, came together. Saadiah, whilst yet in Egypt, had written a book in refutation of Chivi's doctrines. In his philosophy of religion he especially kept in view this tendency, hostile to revelation, and sought to expose its weakness. He also did not lose sight of the objections made against Judaism by Christianity and Islam.

Whilst Saadiah was developing thoughts for the future, he was still under the ban of excommunication. He had, therefore, no other sphere of action than that of an author. But circumstances had changed in the meanwhile. The just Abradhi was now on the throne, in the place of the cruel and avaricious Caliph Kahir, who had decreed Saadiah's deposition. His Vizir Ali Ibn-Isa was favourably inclined towards Saadiah. The Gaon Kohen-Zedek, who made common cause with the Exilarchs, had died in 936. His successor Zemach ben Kafnaï was a harmless man. So David had only Aaron Ibn-Sarjadu to assist him in his quarrel; the people, however, sided with Saadiah. When an important law-suit had to be decided, the one party selected for the purpose the banished and deposed Gaon, whilst the opposite party elected the Exilarch. David was so enraged at this that he persecuted anyone who appealed to Saadiah. This violence caused the more ill-feeling, as the person so maltreated was not under the jurisdiction of the Exilarch. He also had a perfect right to choose his

judge, whereas the Exilarch had no right to oppose his choice.

Respected members of the community now took counsel as to the best means of putting an end to the contention between the Prince of the Exile and the Gaon. The peace-makers met at the house of an influential man in Bagdad, Kasser ben Aaron, the father-in-law of Ibn-Sarjadu, and impressed upon him the fact that the quarrel had already exceeded all bounds, that the community had been split into two camps, and that these things had been followed by the saddest consequences. Kasser gave them his assurance that he would do his best to assist them in restoring peace. He even calmed the hostility of his son-in-law towards Saadiah. The peace-makers thereupon went to David, and argued with him till he yielded. When Kasser was sure that the Exilarch was inclined to reconciliation he hastened to inform Saadiah of it. The whole community of Bagdad joined in the rejoicing. Some accompanied David, others Saadiah, until they met. The enemies embraced each other, and henceforward continued to be the firmest of friends. The reconciliation was so complete that Saadiah accepted David's hospitality for several days. The latter restored him to his office, with many marks of honour.

The academy of Sora regained its former lustre through Saadiah, and threw its sister academy into the shade. In the latter, two men, otherwise unknown, successively filled the post of Gaon. The questions from home and foreign communities were in turn sent to Sora, and Saadiah answered them without delay, although his health was severely impaired, and he was suffering from an incurable melancholy. The answers which have been preserved are numerous; they were probably composed in the last year of his Gaonate. Many of them are in Hebrew, though most of them are in

Arabic. His magnanimity showed itself in his conduct to the family of his opponent, David. When the latter died, in 940, his son Judah was elected in his stead, through Saadiah's influence, though he only filled the post for seven months. On his death he left behind him a son fourteen years old, whom Saadiah appointed as his successor. He received him into his house and adopted him. In the meanwhile a distant relative, a member of the Bene-Haiman family, who lived in Nisibis, was to fill the office. He had scarcely been appointed before he had a quarrel with a Moslem. Witnesses testified that he had spoken disparagingly of Mahomet. For this offence he was put to death. When the last representative of the house of the Exilarch, who had been brought up by Saadiah, was raised to the principedom, Moslem fanaticism was let loose against him. It was determined to assassinate him whilst he was riding in his state carriage, because the mere shadow of princely power among the Jews was disliked. The Caliph tried to prevent his murder, but in vain. Thus died the last of the Exilarchs, and the representatives of Judaism determined to leave the office vacant, by which means they thought to subvert the fanatical hatred.

Thus ended, after an existence of seven centuries, the Exilarchate, which had represented a kind of political independence for Judaism. Just as the dignity of the Patriarchate had ceased in Judæa through the intolerance of the Christian emperors, so the Exilarchate now ceased through the fanaticism of the Mahometans. The two Schools alone remained to represent the unity of the Jews, but even these were soon to be no more. With Saadiah's death, which took place in 942, was extinguished the last glimmer of light for the academy of Sora. It is true that he left a son, Dossa, who was both learned in the Talmud and in

philosophy—the author of several works—but he was not appointed his father's successor. Joseph ben Satia, who was formerly deposed, was again made the chief of the School. He, however, was not able to maintain its superiority over the sister academy, which having at its head Aaron Ibn Sarjadu, the former opponent of Saadiah, again rose to its former prestige.

Ibn Sarjadu had not gone through a regular course of academic instruction, but was a rich merchant of Bagdad. He was chosen on account of his riches, as well as for his knowledge and activity. He occupied his position for eighteen years (943—960). He possessed a good philosophical education, wrote a philosophical work, and a commentary to the Pentateuch. Like Kohen-Zedek, Ibn Sarjadu endeavoured to exalt this school of Pumbaditha at the expense of that of Sora. Questions, which have been preserved, were sent to him from foreign countries. The School of Sora consequently, neglected and impoverished, received none of the revenue, and could not therefore train new pupils, who rather turned to the richer Pumbaditha. This decline and decay of the School induced its chief, Joseph ben Satia, to abandon it, and to emigrate to Bassara (about 948). The school that had been founded by Rab was now closed, after it had continued in existence for seven hundred years. The people of Sora felt this so much that they made an energetic attempt to restore it. Four young men were sent abroad to awaken interest in the school, and to get contributions for it. But they did not attain their object. It seemed that fate was against them. They were captured at Bari, on the coast of Italy, by a Moorish-Spanish Admiral, Ibn-Rumahis. They were transported, one to Egypt, another to Africa, a third to Cordova, and the fourth to Narbonne. Instead of assisting to raise the School

of Sora, these four Talmudic scholars unknowingly contributed to the downfall of the Gaonate.

The copies of the Talmud in Sora, which were now no longer used, were, later on, transferred to Spain. Babylonia, so long the centre of Judaism, had to give up the supremacy in favour of a foreign place. The decay of one of the Babylonian Schools, and the decline of interest that followed upon it, was utilised by the Karaites for making converts amongst the Rabbanites. They did this with such zeal that they thought they were about to strike the death-blow to Rabbanism. As long as Saadiah, the mighty champion of Rabbanism, lived, they did not venture to come within his reach. But after his death, when they perceived that there was no man of any importance to stand in the breach, they thought to obtain an easy victory. Saadiah's opponent, Solomon ben Yerucham, immediately hastened from Palestine to Babylonia, in order to give to those who respected Saadiah, ocular proof that he had misrepresented facts in his defence of the Talmudists. He thought by this to bring over the Rabbanites to Karaism.

But there was a more vehement, bold and cunning proselytiser even than he, in the person of Albusari Sahal ben Mazliach Kohen, an inhabitant of Jerusalem, who belonged to the pious section of the Karaite community. Albusari Sahal had a thorough knowledge of Arabic and Hebrew, and wrote in a much more elegant style than any of his contemporaries. He compiled a Hebrew grammar, commentaries to several books of the Bible, and also a compendium of religious duties under the title "Mizvot." This Karaite, however, did not write anything that was followed by important consequences. It was not the lot of any of the Karaites to get beyond beginnings; much less of Sahal, who was actuated by sombre monkish piety. To his co-religionists, nevertheless, he appeared in the

light of a great teacher. Sahal also wrote a refutation of Saadiah's attacks upon Karaism. It was, doubtless, considered an honourable thing amongst the Karaites, to win their spurs against this great champion. Sahal appears to have delivered his lectures against the Rabbanites in Bagdad. He called upon the people to renounce tradition, and to refuse obedience to the Schools, "which were the two women of whom the prophet Zechariah speaks, and who carried sin and left it in Babylon." Sahal exacted a solemn promise from his hearers to renounce the indulgences that their Rabbanite teachers allowed them.

Sahal's attacks upon the Rabbanites were too serious to remain unanswered. An influential Rabbanite seems to have forced him to be silent by aid of the government. Saadiah's pupil, Jacob ben Samuel, stung to the quick by the abuse which Sahal and other Karaites heaped upon his master, took up the cudgels in his behalf. He delivered speeches in the streets and in the public places against Karaism and the proselytiser Sahal. The latter, however, did not remain silent. In a passionate letter to Jacob, written in a beautiful style, he continued his attacks and gave a faithful picture of the state of Karaism and Rabbanism in his time, leaving out neither the light nor the shade of either side. After an attack made in verse and reproaches on account of Jacob's incorrect Hebrew and the injury done to Judaism on the side of the Rabbanites, Sahal proceeds :

I am come from Jerusalem in order to warn the people and to bring them back to the fear of God. Would that I had the power of going from town to town to awaken the people of the Lord. You think that I came here for the sake of gain, as others do who grind the faces of the poor ; but I came in the name of God in order to bring back the thoughts of the people to true piety, and to warn them not to rely on human institutions, nor to listen to the sayings of the two evil women (the Gaonic Schools). How shall I not do it since my heart is moved by the irreligion of my brethren, who are walking in the wrong path, who impose a heavy yoke upon the ignorant people, who

oppress and rule over them through excommunication and persecution, who call in to aid them the power of the Mahometan officials, who compel the poor to borrow money on interest, in order to benefit themselves by it and to be able to bribe the officials. They feed themselves, but not their flocks, and they do not teach the word of God in the proper way. If anyone asks them the reason for anything they do, they hate him. Far be it from me that I should be silent, when I see that the leaders of the community, who call themselves the Synhedrion, eat together with non-Jews without any compunction. How shall I be silent when I perceive that many of my people make use of idolatrous practices. They sit on the graves of the departed and invoke the dead, and pray to Rabbi José the Galilean, saying, "O heal me, and make me fruitful." They make pilgrimages to the shrines of the pious dead, light candles there, and burn incense. They also make vows that they may be cured of their diseases. O that I had the power to go everywhere and to proclaim it aloud, to admonish men in the name of the Lord, and to deter them from their evil course; "and now, O House of Israel," he continues, "have mercy on your souls, and choose the right path. Do not object and say that the Karaites too differ as regards Religious duties, and that you are in doubt as to the truth. Know, therefore, that the Karaites, do not wish to practise authority; they only desire to stimulate research. You ask, What should the ignorant do who is unable by himself to search the Holy Scriptures? I tell you that such a one has to rely upon the results arrived at by the investigator and the expounder of Holy Writ."

Towards the conclusion, Sahal prophesied that God would destroy the yoke of the two women, as it is written in the prophets; "then and then only will the sons of Israel be reconciled and united, and the Messiah come."

Another prolific Karaite author from Bassorah, Jepheth Ibn-Ali Halevi (flourished 950—990), wrote polemics against the same Jacob ben Samuel. Jepheth was considered as a great teacher by the Karaites. He was a grammarian, commentator and expounder of the Law, but he was not free from the errors of the members of his creed, who were bombastic and diffuse, and he, like them, was superficial and without sound knowledge. The want of Talmudic dialectics was severely felt by the Karaite authors, for it rendered them tedious talkers. Jepheth's absurd polemic against Saadiah's pupil bears this stamp of superficiality and insipidity, and it never displays the beautiful Hebrew style of his contemporary and friend Sahal.

Solomon ben Yerucham, who continued to write till a very old age (at least till 957), composed commentaries to the Pentateuch and the Hagiographa, and other works no longer known. He was a sworn enemy to philosophical research. In his commentary on the Psalms, he bitterly complains that Jews occupy themselves with heretical writings, whose authors and teachers he curses severely.

“Woe to him,” he cries, “who leaves the Book of God and seeks for others. Woe to him who passes his time with strange sciences, and who turns his back upon the pure truth of God! The wisdom of philosophy is vain and worthless, for we do not find two who agree upon a single point. They propound doctrines which directly contradict the Law. Amongst them there are some who study Arabic literature instead of always having the word of God in their mouths.”

What a contrast there is between Saadiah and his Karaite opponent. The one made a friend of philosophy and took it into the service of Judaism, the other (without any knowledge of it) declared it heretical, and allowed his Judaism to become petrified. The Rabbanites entered into the Temple of philosophy, and the Karaites shunned it as an infected house.

In consequence of the zeal with which the Karaites sought to exalt their creed over Rabbanism, they spread more widely about the middle of the tenth century. They penetrated to Spain, and attained a certain superiority in Africa and Asia. We know that the Egyptian Rabbanites accepted much from the Karaites. Moses and Aaron ben Asher, a father and son from Tiberias, exercised a powerful influence at this period. The two Ashers (890—950) were grammarians and Massorites. They wrote on the Hebrew accents and biblical orthography in so difficult a style and such miserable rhyme, that their observations are for the most part incomprehensible. But though these insignificant works obtained no importance, yet considerable value attaches to the copies of the Bible,

which were corrected by them with the greatest care and exactness according to the Massoretic rules, which they completely mastered. These copies of the Bible of Ben-Asher were looked upon as models both by the Karaites and the Rabbanites, and treated as sacred. New copies were afterwards made from these in Jerusalem and Egypt. The Massoretic texts of the Bible now in use are, to a large extent, derived from Ben-Asher's original copies, because the Rabbanites afterwards overlooked the fact that the scribe was a Karaite.

Saadia, on the contrary, who could well have known Ben-Asher, the son, was dissatisfied with these Massoretic works, and wrote a very keen polemic against him. In addition to Saadia, Ben-Naphtali raised objections against the results of Ben-Asher's Massoretic investigations, though mostly on insignificant points. Nevertheless, the text of the Bible according to the Massorites of Tiberias maintained its superiority. The old Eastern signs for vowels and accents to the Bible text were changed, extended and improved, by the Massoretic school of Ben-Asher.

With the decay of the Exilarchate and of the School of Sora, Asia lost the leadership of Judaism. If Pumbaditha, under Aaron Ibn Sarjadu, flattered itself that it possessed the supremacy, it was deceived. After Ibn Sarjadu's death internal quarrels resulted in its destruction. Nehemiah, the son of Kohen-Zedek, and the rival of Ibn Sarjadu, though he had no followers, obtained the post of head of the school through cunning (960). The college however, led by the chief Judge Sherira ben Chananya, opposed him. There were a few members and rich laymen who supported Nehemiah, but his opponents refused to recognise him during the whole period of his office (960—968). During the time that the two parties were contending for the Gaonate of Pumbaditha, and with it the religious authority

over the Jews, the four men who had been sent from Sora to collect contributions from the various communities, and who had been taken captive, had founded new schools in Egypt, Africa (Kairuan), Spain and France, and thereby separated the communities from the Gaonate. These four men who caused the seeds of the Talmudic spirit to blossom in various places were :— Shemaria ben Elchanan, who was sold by the Admiral Ibn-Rumahis in Alexandria, and then being ransomed by the Jewish community, finally reached Misr (Cairo). The second was Chushiel, who was sold on the coast of Africa, and who came to Kairuan. The third was probably Nathan ben Isaac Kohen, the Babylonian, who perhaps reached Narbonne. The fourth was Moses ben Chanoch, who underwent more dangers than the other three. He was the only one of the four who was married. His beautiful and pious wife, and his young son had accompanied him on his journey, and were taken prisoners together with him. Ibn-Rumahis had set eyes upon the beautiful woman and designed to violate her. The wife, however, asked her husband in Hebrew whether those that were drowned could hope for resurrection, and when he answered in the affirmative and confirmed his answer by a verse from the Bible, she threw herself into the sea and was drowned. In deep sorrow and in the garb of the slave, Moses ben Chanoch was carried with his little son to Cordova, where he was ransomed by the Jewish community. They never for a moment imagined that with him Spain had obtained the supremacy over the Jews of all other countries. Moses did not betray his deep knowledge of the Talmud to the community into whose midst he had been cast, so that he might not derive any advantage from his knowledge of the Law. He, therefore, at first behaved like any ordinary captive. Moses soon made his way to the school of Cordova, the president of which was

Nathan. He was a Rabbi and also Judge, and possessed but slight Talmudical knowledge, but was regarded as a shining light in Spain. Moses sat near the door in the corner as an ignorant listener. But when he perceived that Nathan in expounding a passage in the Talmud made a childish mistake, he modestly ventured to make some objections in which he betrayed his scholarship. The audience in this school was astounded to perceive such a thorough Talmudist in the ill-clad captive, who had just recovered his freedom.

Moses was called upon to explain the passage in question, and also to solve other difficulties. He did this in a practical way to the intense delight of all present. On that very day Nathan declared before those who were under his jurisdiction, "I can no longer be your Judge and Rabbi. That stranger, who is now so miserably clothed, must henceforth take my place." The rich community of Cordova immediately chose Moses for their Rabbinical chief, gave him rich presents and a salary, and placed a carriage at his disposal. When the admiral Ibn-Rumahis heard that his prisoner was so precious to the community of Cordova, he wished to retract the sale in order to get a higher ransom. The Jews appealed to the just Caliph, Abdul-Rahman III., by means of the Jewish statesman Chasdaï, and represented to him that they would be able, through Rabbi Moses, to sever themselves from the Gaonate of the eastern Caliphate. Abdul-Rahman, who, to his intense regret, had seen considerable sums of money yearly taken out of his land for the Gaonate, *i.e.*, to the land which was hostile to him, was glad that a place would now be founded in his own kingdom for the study of the Talmud, and signified to his admiral his wish that he should desist from his demand. Thus Cordova became the seat of an important school that was independent of the Gaonate. Like Moses, his former fellow-prisoners

were soon recognised by the communities of Kahirah and Kairuan as eminent scholars, and founded important Talmudical schools in Egypt and in the land of the Fatimide Caliphate. These men undesignedly severed the communities of Spain and of the Mahometan Andalusia from the Gaonate. The state of politics and culture eminently fitted Spain or the Mahometan (Moorish) Andalusia to become the centre point of united Judaism, and to take the leadership which Babylon had abdicated. Egypt was no longer an independent kingdom, but only a province of the Fatimide Caliphate, which had conquered it through the policy of a Jewish renegade. In addition to this, Egypt did not offer a favourable field for a higher civilisation, but continued to be what nature had made it, the granary of the world. The empire of the Fatimides in north Africa, whose chief town was Kairuan (afterwards Mahadia), at least afforded the principal conditions for the development of Judaism, and might well have become one of its chief centres. The rich community of Kairuan took the liveliest interest in the study of the Talmud, as well as in scientific efforts. Even before Chushiel's arrival they had schools, and a chief who possessed the title of Resh-Kalla or Rosh. Just as they had befriended and honoured the banished Exilarch Ukba, they now bestowed the title Rosh on Chushiel, and enabled him to give a higher impulse to the study of the Talmud. The latter educated two pupils during his office (950—980), who were afterwards recognised as authorities. These were his son Chananel and a native, Jacob ben Nissim Ibn-Shahin. The physician and favourite of the first two Caliphs, Isaac Israeli, had sown the seeds of Jewish science which was developed by a pupil of his who likewise obtained court favour.

This pupil Abusahal Dunash ben Tamim (900—960), the head of Jewish science in the Fatimide

dominions, was physician to the third Fatimide Caliph, Ishmael Almansur Ibnul' Kaim, perhaps also to his father. Dunash was held in such favour by this ruler that he dedicated to him one of his works on astronomy. Dunash ben Tamim came from Irak, perfected himself in his youth under Isaac Israeli in Kairuan, from whom he learned medicine, languages, and metaphysics. Dunash ben Tamim was accomplished in the whole circle of sciences then known, and wrote books on medicine and astronomy and mathematics. He also classified the sciences; in his opinion mathematics, astronomy, and music rank lowest; next come physics and medicine; highest of all are metaphysics, the knowledge of God and the soul. The Arabs thought so highly of Dunash that they said he had become a convert to Islam, doubtless in order that they might count him amongst their own. But he certainly remained faithful to Judaism to the end of his life; he corresponded with the Jewish statesman Chasdaï, for whom he composed an astronomical work on the Jewish calendar.

Meanwhile, even though Dunash was not very important in himself, he was able to give the community of Kairuan, and through them to a wider circle, a more scientific comprehension of Judaism. The Fatimide Caliphate, however, was not to become the seat of culture for the Jews. The fanatic Fatimide dynasty—raised to power through an enthusiastic missionary, who saw in the Caliph of the house of Ali a kind of embodied divinity, and founded by a deluded deceiver who considered himself as the true Imam and Mahdi (priest)—could not logically tolerate Judaism. The successors of the first Fatimide Caliph, just as the successors of the first Christian Emperor had done, used the sword as the means of spreading religion. Soon there came to the

throne a Fatimide who repaired what his ancestors had in their indulgence neglected, and preached the doctrines of the divine Imamate with fearful fanaticism. With such surroundings Judaism could not gain the light, for which it required a more favourable situation.

The European Christian countries were still less fit to become the centre of Judaism than were the Mahometan kingdoms of Egypt and North Africa. At that time the greatest barbarity obtained there, and circumstances were not at all favourable for the development of science and literature. The literary status of the Jews was very low, and the historical reports are therefore silent on the Jewish communities of Europe. Here and there Talmudical scholars arose in Italy and Oria (near Otranto), scarcely any of whom rose above mediocrity. Though the Italian Jews never attained superiority, they yet were diligent and faithful pupils of foreign teachers. In Babylonia they laughed at "the wise men" of Rome or Italy. Even Sabbatai Donnolo, the head of Jewish science in Italy at the time of Saadiah, could scarcely be described as even a moderate scholar. This man is known rather through his career than through his works. Sabbatai Donnolo (913-970) from Oria was taken prisoner when the Mahometans of the Fatimide kingdom pressed forward across the Straits of Sicily, made inroads upon Apulia and Calabria, and plundered the town Oria, and either murdered or took the inhabitants away as captives (9th of Tammuz—4th July, 925). Donnolo was twelve years old at this time. Ten of the chief citizens were put to death, and Donnolo's parents and relations were transported to Palermo and Africa. He himself was ransomed in Trani. Orphaned and without friends, the young Donnolo was thrown upon his own resources. He studied medicine and astrology,

in both of which he made himself proficient. He now became physician to the Byzantine viceroy (Basilicus) Eupraxios, who ruled Calabria in the name of the Emperor. He became rich through his medical practice, and spent his money in buying up works on astrology and in travelling. In his journeys Donnolo went as far as Bagdad. He embodied the result of his researches in a work published in 946. There was but little wisdom contained in this book, if we are to judge by the fragments that still remain to us. The author, however, put such a high value upon it, that he thought that through it the name "Sabbatai Donnolo from Oria" would be handed down to posterity.

Meanwhile, however unimportant Donnolo was compared with his contemporaries, Saadiah and others, he yet appears to have been far superior to the head of the Catholics at this time. This was his countryman Nilus the younger, whom the Church canonised. The relations of the two Italians—the Jewish physician and the abbot of Rossana and Grotta Ferrata—serve us as a landmark by which we can estimate the condition of Judaism and Christianity in Italy in the middle of the tenth century.

Donnolo had been acquainted with Nilus from his youth; perhaps they had both suffered when southern Italy was plundered. The Jewish physician once noticed that the Christian ascetic was very ill, owing to excessive mortification. He generously offered him a remedy. The holy Nilus, however, declined his offer, remarking that he would not take the medicine of a Jew, so that he might not be able to boast that he had cured him—the holy—the worker of miracles, for that would mislead the simple-minded Christians who would then have more confidence in the Jews.

Judaism ever strove towards the light, whilst monastic Christianity remained in the darkness. Thus it was that in the tenth century there was only one country that offered a suitable soil for the development of Judaism, where it could blossom and flourish—it was Mahometan Spain, which comprised the greater part of the peninsula of the Pyrenees.

Whilst Christian Europe sank into a state of barbarism, from which the Carlovingians endeavoured to free it, and the eastern Caliphate was in the final stage of its decay, the Spanish Caliphate, under the sons of Omeyya, was in so flourishing a condition, that it almost makes us forget the Middle Ages. Under Abdul-Rahman III. (An-Nasir), who was the first to enjoy the full title of the Caliphs, “Prince of the Faithful” (Emir-Al-Mumenin), Spain was the exclusive seat of science and art, which were everywhere else proscribed, or at least neglected. With him began the classical period of Moslem culture, with which were united prosperity and vigour. These could only reach the height they attained because their bearers were noble princes free from prejudice against the members of other religions.

Specially honoured in Spain were the favourites of the Muses—the poets. A successful poem was more glorified than a victorious battle, which itself was the subject of poetry. Every great Caliph, even to the lowest provincial Emir, was anxious and proud to number learned men and poets amongst his friends, for whom he furnished the means of obtaining a livelihood. Scientific men and poets were appointed to high offices, and entrusted with the most important state secrets.

In such a spiritual atmosphere the Jews of Spain could not divest themselves of the innate emotion and sensibility of the Jewish race. An enthusiasm for science and poetry seized them, and Jewish

Spain became “the place of civilisation and of spiritual activity—a garden of fragrant, joyous, and happy poetry, as well as the seat of earnest research and clear thought.” Like the Arabian Christians (the Christians who lived amongst the Mahometans) the Jews made themselves acquainted with the language and literature of their conquerors, and often got the precedence over them. But whilst Arabian Christians gave up their own individuality, forgot their own language—Gothic Latin—and could not even read the creeds, and were ashamed of Christianity, the Jews of Spain were so little affected through this contact with Arabs, that it only served to increase their love and enthusiasm for their mother tongue, their holy law, and their religion. Through favourable circumstances Jewish Spain was in a position at first to rival Babylonia, then to supersede it, and finally to maintain its superiority for nearly five hundred years. Three men were the founders of the Judæo-Spanish culture: (1.) The Talmudical scholar, who had been carried captive to Cordova; (2.) The first Andalusian grammarian, Menachem ben Saruk; (3.) and the Creator of the artistic form of Jewish poetry, Dunash Ibn-Labrat. This culture, however, could only unfold itself through one man, who by means of his high endowments, of his pure character and prominent position, was enabled to give the impulse to it. This man was Abu-Yussuf Chasdai ben Isaac Ibn-Shaprut (915—970) a member of the noble family of Ibn-Ezra. He was the first of a long succession of high-minded and important persons who made the protection and furthering of Judaism the task of their lives.

Chasdai was quite modern in his character, which entirely deviated from the type of his predecessors. His easy, pliant, and genial nature was free both from the heaviness of the orientals

and the gloomy earnestness of the Jews. His actions and expressions make us look upon him rather as a European, and through him, so to speak, Jewish history receives a European character. His ancestors came from Jaen; his father Isaac, who probably lived at Cordova, was wealthy, liberal, and a lesser Mæcenas. His son inherited from him a love of science, and the worthy application of riches. He only attained a theoretical knowledge of medicine, but in literature he was more successful, as well as in diplomacy. Not only did he know Hebrew and Arabic well, but he had a good acquaintance with Latin, then only understood by the clergy amongst the Spanish Christians.

The Caliph Abdul-Rahman III., who stood in diplomatic relationship with the small Christian courts of north Spain, perceived Chasdaï's value and usefulness, and appointed him as interpreter and diplomatist (940). At first Chasdaï only had to accompany the principal ambassadors to the Spanish Christian courts. But the more able he proved himself, the more was he honoured and advanced. On one occasion Chasdaï's diplomacy proved very useful. He once induced a king of a province, Leon (Sancho Ramirez) and a queen of Navara (Toda), together with the clergy and other great people to visit Cordova, in order to conclude a lasting treaty of peace with Abdul-Rahman. The Caliph rewarded his services by appointing him to various offices. Chasdaï was, in a certain sense, minister of foreign affairs. He had to receive foreign ambassadors and their presents, and to give them presents from the Caliph in return. He was, at the same time, the minister of trade and finance, and the revenue that arose from the various taxes and tolls, that went to the Treasury, passed through his hands. In spite of all this Chasdaï had no official title. He was neither Vizir (the Hagib of the Spanish Arabs) nor the secretary of State (Katib).

For the Arabs also at first had a strong prejudice against the Jews, in consequence of which they did not allow them to be included amongst the state officials. Nor was the ripening culture of Mahometan Spain yet advanced enough to overcome the anti-Jewish sentiments of the Koran.

Even the just and noble prince who at this time was the greatest ornament of the throne, dared not throw off these inborn prejudices. It remained for the Jews themselves to overcome them gradually through their spiritual superiority. Chasdai inspired favourable opinions amongst the Andalusian Moslems for his co-religionists, and was able, through his personal intercourse with the Caliphs, to shield them from misrepresentation. And so a Jewish poet was able to say of him :—

“ He took the oppressor’s yoke from his people,
Dedicated his soul to it, and drew it to his heart ;
Brake the scourge that wounded it ;
Terrified its heartless oppressors.
The Incomparable sent him some crumbs
Of comfort and salvation.”

This praise is by no means exaggerated. Chasdai was indeed a comforter and deliverer to all the communities far and near. His high position and wealth rendered him useful to his brethren. His deep religious feeling caused him to see that he must thank God for the high estimation in which he was held, and that it was not due to his own deserts ; he therefore felt a call to be active in the cause of his religion and his race. He was, to some extent, the legal and political head of the Jewish community of Cordova. The Babylonian School, which obtained many contributions through his means, gave him the title “ Head of the School ” (Resh-Kallah), although he knew less of the Talmud than the Nathan who had resigned his position in favour of Moses. He corresponded with Dunash ben Tamim, whom he asked to work out some as-

tronomical calculations on the Jewish calendar for him. He also corresponded with Saadiah's son Dossa, and requested him to send him a biography of his father. The ambassadors of many nations, who either sought the favour or the protection of the Caliph, brought him presents in order to ensure his furthering their cause. From them he always asked particulars as to the condition of the Jews, and obtained favours for his brethren.

Chasdaï played an important part in two embassies from the mightiest courts of Europe, with the history of which his name has been associated. The Byzantine empire, oppressed on all sides, had remained lifeless for several centuries, and was now in need of foreign assistance. The weak and learned Emperor Constantine VIII., the son and brother of the emperors who had caused the Jews so much trouble, sought a diplomatic alliance with the mighty Moslem conqueror of Spain, in order to gain an ally against the eastern Caliphate. He therefore sent a magnificent embassy to Cordova (944—949) with rich presents, amongst which was a beautiful copy of a Greek medical work by Dioscorides on simple remedies, which the Caliph and his medical college greatly desired to obtain. The ambassadors from the most anti-Jewish court were received by the Jewish statesman and introduced to the emperor. But the work upon which the Arabic physicians and naturalists had set so high a value was a sealed book to them. Abdul-Rahman, therefore, begged the Byzantine emperor to send him a scholar who understood both Greek and Latin. Constantine, who wished to show his goodwill to the Mahometan court, sent a monk named Nicholas as interpreter. Amongst all the physicians of Cordova, Chasdaï was the only one who understood Latin, and he was, therefore, requested by the Caliph to take part in the translation. Nicholas could thus translate the original Greek into Latin,

and Chasdai re-translated it into Arabic. Abdul-Rahman was pleased with the completion of a work which, according to his thinking, lent a glorious splendour to his kingdom. Chasdai, too, had a part in the embassy which was sent by the powerful German Emperor Otto I. to the court of Cordova. Abdul-Rahman had previously sent a messenger to Otto, and in a letter he had made use of certain unseemly expressions against Christianity. The Andalusian ambassadors, however, had to wait several years before they were admitted to an audience with the king. After they had been received, the German emperor sent an embassy, at whose head was the Abbot John of Gorze (Jean de Bendières), and a letter, in which there were harsh expressions against Islam. The Caliph, who suspected something of the kind, asked Chasdai to find out for him the contents of the diplomatic letter. Chasdai treated with John of Gorze for several days, and although the latter was very clever, Chasdai outwitted him, and learnt from him the purport of the letter. Thereupon Abdul-Rahman kept the German envoys waiting for a whole year before admitting them to an audience. He would have kept them waiting still longer had not Chasdai and the Arab-Christian Bishop of Cordova induced John of Gorze, to endeavour to procure a new and straightforward document from the emperor (956—959). Chasdai, who, from his position, had to deal with public affairs on a large scale, felt very grieved when he thought of the state of the Jews, of their dependent and suffering position, their dispersion, and their want of unity. How often must he have heard the Mahometans and Christians make their most powerful objection against Judaism, saying that “God has rejected them, inasmuch as the sceptre hath departed from Judah.” Even Chasdai shared the restricted view of the time, viz., that a religion and a people without a country,

king, court, sovereignty, and subjects, had neither firmness nor vitality.

The rumour of the existence of an independent Jewish community in the land of the Chazars, which had even penetrated to Spain, occupied his attention more than it had occupied his Jewish contemporaries. Eldad's appearance in Spain, about ten years before Chasdai's birth, had given probability to the vague tradition, but, on the other hand, rendered it improbable through the exaggeration that the ten tribes were still in existence in all their strength. Chasdai never failed to make inquiries about a Jewish kingdom or a Jewish ruler when embassies came to him from far or near. The news of a Jewish community in the land of the Chazars, which he received from ambassadors from Chorasán, was very welcome to him, especially when he learnt that a Jewish king was on the throne there. He now heartily wished to enter into an alliance with this king. He rejoiced when the news was confirmed by the Byzantine ambassadors, who gave him the additional information that the reigning king of the Chazars was called Joseph, and that they were a powerful and warlike nation. This information served only to increase his desire to enter into a close alliance with the Jewish kingdom and its ruler. He therefore sought for a trustworthy messenger who could take charge of his letter of homage, and at the same time bring back further particulars. After several vain attempts he succeeded in effecting the desired alliance. In an embassy of the Slavonic king from the Lower Danube there were two Jews who had to act as interpreters in Cordova.

The unity existing between the Jews rendered it possible for them to enter into such alliances as even the most powerful states could not make. Chasdai gave the Slavonic ambassadors a letter to the king of the Chazars. This letter, in beautiful Hebrew prose

with introductory verses, written by Menachem ben Saruk, is a priceless document for the history of the time. The author, in his pious wishes and in his humble bearing, skilfully permitted his statesmanship and a sense of his own worth to be seen. Chasdaï's letter fortunately reached the hands of King Joseph, through the instrumentality of a man Jacob ben Eleazar from Nemes (Germany). Joseph was the eleventh Jewish descendant of the Jewish Chazars from Obadiah, the probable founder of Judaism in that country. The country of the Chazars even at that time (960) still possessed great power, although it had already lost several districts or feudatory lands. The residence of King Joseph was situated on an island on the Volga, and included a golden tent-like palace having a golden door. The kings had to oppose the Russians, who had become more powerful since the emigration of the Waragi, and who always coveted the fruitful country of the Chazars. They found it necessary to keep a standing army for that purpose, to be enabled to attack the enemy at a moment's notice. In the tenth century there were 12,000 regular soldiers, partly cavalry provided with helmets and coats of mail, and partly infantry armed only with spears. The decaying Byzantine empire was forced to respect the kingdom of the Chazars as a great power, and to recognise the Jewish ruler as "the noble and illustrious king." Whilst the Byzantine emperors used to seal their diplomatic letters to the Pope and to the Frankish emperors with a golden bull of light weight (two solidi), they made it one-third heavier when they wrote to the kings of the Chazars. Whoever is acquainted with the pedantic etiquette of this unstable court will at once recognise how much lay in this mark of honour. The Chazar kings took great interest in their foreign co-religionists, and made reprisals for the wrong that had been done to the Jews. The king

expressed his joy at receiving Chasdaï's letter, and corrected the false impression that the land of the Chazars had always been inhabited by Jews. "The Chazars were rather of heathen origin," he wrote in his answer, and narrated how his great ancestor Bulan had been converted to Judaism. He went on to enumerate the successors of Bulan, all of whom had Jewish names. He then describes the extent of his dominions, and the various peoples that were subject to him. As regards the hopes of a Messianic redemption which the king cherished, he remarks that neither he nor his people knew anything definite. "We set our eyes upon Jerusalem," he says, "and also upon the Babylonian Schools. May God speedily bring about the redemption." "You write," he says, "that you long to see me. I have the same longing to make the acquaintance of yourself and your wisdom. If this wish could be fulfilled, and I might speak to you face to face, you should be my father and I would be your son, and I would entrust the government of my state in your hands."

When Joseph completed this letter he could boast of still more peaceful relations. But circumstances changed in the course of a few years. One of Rurik's descendants, the Russian Prince Sviatislav of Kief, formerly almost a subject of the Chazars, made a formidable attack upon the country, and captured the fortress of Sarkel (965). The conqueror grew more powerful, and, a few years later, in 969, the same Sviatislav took the Capital Itil (Atel), and also captured Semender, the second town of the Chazars. The Chazars sought flight, some going to an island on the Caspian sea, others to Derbend, and yet others to the Crimea, where many members of the same race lived, and which henceforth received the name of "the Land of the Chazars." Its capital was Bosphorus (Kertch). Thus did the kingdom of the Chazars decline, and

Joseph was its last king who possessed any power. When Chasdaï received his letter his patron, Abdul-Rahman was dead. His son Alhakem, an even more zealous patron of science and poetry than his father, now sat upon the throne. More peacefully disposed than his father, he honoured Chasdaï, whom he made an important state official, and whose superior talents he employed as freely as his father had done.

Moved by the example of two Caliphs, who respected genius, Chasdaï imitated them with regard to the Jews, and he deserves credit for having given the impulse to the Jewish-Andalusian culture. He drew around him to Cordova a band of talented philosophers and poets, who in turn immortalised him in their works and poems. "In Spain far and wide, wisdom was cherished in Chasdaï's time. His praise was sung by eloquent tongues." Only two of the philosophers and poets of this time became famous, Menachem ben Saruk and Dunash ben Labrat. Both of these made the Hebrew language, which they considerably enriched, the object of deep research. They went far beyond all their predecessors, who had worked at philology, viz., the Karaites and even Saadiah.

Dunash ben Labrat in his works produced a symmetry and harmony of expression from the holy language such as was scarcely conceivable to his predecessors. He was the first to employ metre in Hebrew poesy, which he made melodious through the introduction of the strophe. Dunash was blamed by Saadiah for this as if he had made an unheard-of innovation. Saadiah thought that violence was done to the Hebrew language by it. The new Hebrew poetry was, however, enriched through the efforts of the Jewish - Andalusian writers. Hitherto, poetical compositions had been of a Synagogal character, always gloomy, and never assuming a joyful tone. Even hymnal

poetry was not devoid of this characteristic and continued halting and rugged according to the model of Kaliri. In didactic and controversial poems a miserable doggerel was used as in the verses of Solomon bar Yerucham, of Abu-Ali Jepheth, of Ben-Asher and Sabbataï Donnolo. Chasdaï, however, gave the poets an opportunity of changing their subjects. His imposing person, his high position, his deeds, and his princely liberality had an inspiring influence upon the poets, and whilst they sang his praises in animated strains, they breathed new life into the apparently dead Hebrew language, rendering it capable of development, and at the same time musical. Of course, the Jewish-Andalusian poets took the Arabs as their model. They in truth do not deny that "Arab was the teacher of Eber." But Dunash and others, who soon imitated him, did not slavishly adhere to their Arab pattern, nor adopt its unnatural metre, but they selected its beauties and imitated them. The verses at the beginning of this flourishing period of poetry were brisk and lively in their measure, and yet the Hebrew poetry of the epoch of Chasdaï did not entirely cast off its fetters, nor change its high-flown style. "The poets first began to sing in Chasdaï's time" as the inimitable critic of a later time remarks. The idyll of the new Hebrew poesy now developed itself into panegyric and satire, but it did not lose sight of liturgical poetry, which it also adorned with the beauty of metre.

Little is known of the life and character of the first two founders of the Andalusian-Jewish culture. As far as can be gathered from existing materials, Menachem ben Saruk, of Tortosa, (born 910, died 970,) was in needy circumstances from his earliest years; at any rate, his inheritance from his father was too small to maintain him. Chasdaï's father Isaac was interested in him, and took care that

pecuniary difficulties should not destroy the germ of poetry which was latent in him. His favourite occupation was the study of the Hebrew language. To accomplish his object he made use of the works of his predecessors, but he did not acquire his noble Hebrew style from them, for it was born with him.

When Chasdai had attained his high position, he invited the favourite of his father with flattering words and glowing promises. Menachem became Chasdai's court poet, and was warmly attached to him, praising him in every kind of verse, and, as he himself affirms, "created poetry for the sake of singing Chasdai's praises." Chasdai encouraged him to write on the philology of the Hebrew language, and to endeavour to ascertain its various forms, and to investigate the meanings of words. Menachem in consequence wrote a complete Hebrew dictionary (*Machberet*), in which he included some grammatical rules, and in which he corrected his predecessors in many respects. Brought up amidst surroundings where the harmonious and impressively-spoken word was of much consequence, the grammarian of Tortosa valued language in general very highly, and the Hebrew language in particular; while it was the aim of his work to discover the peculiar refinements of this language. Menachem ben Saruk was the first to clearly distinguish the pure roots in the Hebrew language, and to separate them from the formative prefixes and suffixes—a theory which now appeared for the first time, and which had been misapprehended by previous grammarians. This misapprehension indeed had led them into using malformed and ill-sounding words in their verses. Menachem, in his lexicographical work, puts the various forms at the side of each root, and often expounds their meanings with surprising clearness and tact. In cases where he gives a peculiar explanation according to his understanding of the Biblical verse, he often shows

healthy thought and refined taste, and there is a very marked step forward in the direction of exegesis from Saadiah to Menachem. Now and again he gave explanations which were opposed to Talmudic tradition and the ideas of the time. His lexicographical work was much read and used, because it was written in Hebrew. It found its way into France and Italy, supplanted the works of Saadiah and the Karaites, and, for a long time, was the guide-book for Bible expositors. But grand and flowing as Menachem's Hebrew prose is, his verse is unattractive and awkward; he did not yet understand how to handle the Hebrew metre. He was, however, supplemented by his rival Dunash ben Labrat.

This poet (also called Adonim) came from Bagdad, and was younger than Menachem (born 920, died 970). He afterwards lived in Fez, and was invited likewise to Cordova by Chasdaï. Dunash appears to have been wealthy, and was thus able to be freer and more independent than the grammarian of Tortosa. He must have been a man of a spirited and reckless disposition, who did not weigh his words, but was well adapted for literary controversy. He, too, possessed a deep knowledge of the Hebrew language, and was a far more successful poet than Menachem; and, as has been already mentioned, he was the first of the Rabbanite circle in Spain to introduce metre into the new Hebrew poetry to which he thereby gave a fresh charm. He was, however, bold and over-venturesome. He criticised Saadiah's exegetical and grammatical works in a polemic (*Teshubot*), assuming rather a harsh tone, although he was personally acquainted with the author, and was perhaps his pupil. As soon as Menachem's book reached him, Dunash determined to write an unsparing criticism of it, and to bring its mistakes to light. This book, too, was called "*Teshubot*," and was of a witty but scornful

character. Dunash did not keep within the limits of a scientific quarrel, but gave it a greater practical importance. He dedicated his critical works against Menachem to the Jewish statesman, whom he flattered so abjectly in some prefatory verses, that we can hardly fail to see that his object was to gain over the Jewish Mæcenæ to his side, and to injure Menachem in the eyes of the latter.

Dunash's flattery of the Jewish statesman and his coarse polemic against Menachem are neither of them wanting in power. The admiration of Chasdaï for Ben-Saruk was diminished when he perceived that Dunash was a better poet, and at least as good a philologist. When various calumniators who wished to ingratiate themselves into the favour of the Jewish prince traduced Menachem before him, Chasdaï's favour was withdrawn from the latter and changed into direct hostility. The occasion of this calumny is not known.

Menachem appears to have died before his rival Dunash, and his pupils undertook to justify him. Jehuda ben Daud, Isaac Ibn Jikatillia, and Ben-Kafren (Ephraim) were the most important of these. They, too, dedicated their polemical writings to the Jewish minister, and sent him a panegyric and a satire against Dunash. Chasdaï seems to have just returned from a diplomatic victory which he had won for the Caliph Alhakem. The followers of Menachem made good use of this, and celebrated his triumph. "The mountains greet the protector of learning, the prince of Judah. All the world rejoices at his return, for whenever he was absent, darkness set in; the haughty ruled and fell upon Judah's sons. But Chasdaï brings back peace and order. God has appointed him prince, and granted him the king's favour, whereby He exalted him above all the nobles."

Menachem's defenders tried to refer the matter in dispute to his love of truth, and to make him the

arbiter against Dunash, "who set himself up, with no fixed object, as the chief of commentators, and who desecrated and spoiled the holy language through his foreign metre." The investigation of the Hebrew language was carried on in Spain by means of severe contention and virulent satire. The pupils of Dunash continued the quarrel. The followers of Menachem and Dunash hurled witty lampoons against each other, which fact contributed largely towards making the Hebrew language at once pliant and rich.

Just as Chasdaï Ibn-Shaprut had given an impulse to various poets and writers through encouragements and rewards, he also founded a home for the study of the Talmud in Spain. Jewish science in Europe had not yet attained a sufficiently firm footing to enable it to dispense with the fostering care of a protector. Moses ben Chanoch, too, who had been chosen to collect contributions for the School of Sora, and who had been brought as a slave to Cordova and there redeemed, found a patron in Chasdaï, and the two Caliphs who were friendly to science beheld with pleasure the study of the Talmud springing up in their realms. They thought by this means to sever their Jewish subjects from the Caliphate of Bagdad. Moses could not have come to Spain at a more favourable time for placing the study of the Talmud on a firm basis, without which the literary activity just springing up could not have made progress. Just as the Spanish Moors had busied themselves in endeavouring to cast the Caliphate of Bagdad into the shade, and to assume all political and literary distinctions, so the Spanish Jews thought to obscure the Babylonian Schools, and to transfer to the school which Moses had opened in Cordova the superiority the former had hitherto enjoyed owing to the deeper knowledge of the Talmud there.

They consequently treated him with great de-

ference, surrounded him with splendour, and recognised him as their head. Religious questions which had hitherto been sent to the Babylonian schools, henceforth were directed to Moses. From all parts of Africa, eager students flocked to his school. There now arose an emulation for thorough Talmudical knowledge, whereby they would be able to dispense with the Babylonian teachers. Chasdai gave orders for copies of the Talmud to be bought at his expense in Sora, where many lay idle and unused through the decay of the Soranian School. These he distributed amongst the pupils, whom he doubtless furnished with means of subsistence. Thus Cordova became the Andalusian Sora, and the founder of the school there had the same significance for Spain as Rab had for Babylon. Although he enjoyed the modest title of judge (Dayan), he yet performed the various functions of a Gaon. He ordained Rabbis for the various communities, as it appears, by the ceremony of laying his hands upon them (Semicha); he expounded the Law, the highest appeal was made to him in legal cases, and he could excommunicate rebellious members of the community. All these functions devolved upon the Rabbis in later times.

Thus Spain became in many ways the centre-point of Judaism. Several apparently accidental events contributed to this result, and the awakened sentiment of the Spanish Jews did not allow this superiority to depart from their midst; in fact, they took far greater pains to assert and to deserve it. The prosperity of the Cordova community made it possible for them to make the Andalusian capital the goal of their ambition. Cordova numbered several thousand rich families, who were well able to vie with the Arabs in love of show. They clothed themselves in silk, wore costly turbans, and drove in splendid carriages. They rode on horses, and adopted a splendour in their life which distinguished them.

from the Jews of other lands. We cannot, however, deny the fact that many of them owed their wealth to their trade in Slavonian slaves. These they bought and gave over to the Caliphs, who gradually formed their bodyguard from them.

After Moses' death (965) a division threatened the community of Cordova in consequence of the succession. On the one side was Moses' son Chanoch, who had shared his parent's captivity when a child, and had seen his mother throw herself into the sea. His rival was Joseph ben Isaac Ibn-Abitur, who was the distinguished pupil of Moses. He possessed a sound knowledge of Arabic literature, was a tolerable poet, and a native of Spain. But Chanoch possessed no attainments except the knowledge of the Talmud, and the advantage of being the son of a man who had been highly esteemed.

The two rivals were equally distinguished for their piety and character. There were consequently two parties—the one for the native, who was the representative of culture, the other for Moses' son. Meanwhile, before the strife had taken a serious turn, Chasdaï lent his powerful influence in favour of Chanoch. The latter thus became Rabbi of Cordova and the authority for the Jewish-Spanish communities. As long as the Jewish minister of Alhakem lived Chanoch's Rabbinate remained unmolested. Chasdaï Ibn-Shaprut died during the lifetime of the noble Caliph (970), and left behind him an illustrious name which both Jews and Mahometans vied in handing down to posterity.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RISE OF THE JEWISH-SPANISH CULTURE, AND THE DECAY OF THE GAONATE.

The Gaon Sherira and his Son Hai—Sherira's Historical Letter—The Jewish Congregations in Spain—Jewish Culture in Andalusia—The Disciples of Menachem and Dunash—Jehuda Chayuj—Contest between Chanoch and Ibn Abitur—Jacob Ibn Jau—The Jews of France—Nathan the Babylonian and Leontin—The Jews of Germany—Gershom and his Ordinances—The Emperor Henry II.—The Caliph Hakem—The Jewish Chagan David and the Russians—Destruction of the Jewish-Chazarian Kingdom—The Karaites—Joseph Alkarkassani and Levi Halevi—Hai Gaon—His Character and Importance—Samuel bar Chophni—Chizkia, the last Gaon—Samuel Ibn Najrela—Jonah Ibn Janach.

970—1050 C.E.

IF an institution of historic origin is doomed to sink into oblivion, no efforts, however strenuous on the part of individuals, can serve to inspire it with fresh vitality, and should it even succeed by the most generous sacrifices in deferring the time of its extinction, its existence can at best be but a shadowy one.

So it happened to the Babylonian Gaonate, once so full of life. After the most cultured communities of Spain and Africa had withdrawn their support, and had made themselves independent, they could not expect it to exist much longer. It was in vain that two men, who, one after the other, adorned the School of Pumbaditha by their virtue and knowledge, made a strenuous effort to breathe new life into it. They only succeeded in staying the death of the Gaonate for somewhat more than half a century, but they were unable to restore it entirely. These two men—

father and son, the last heads of note of the School of Pumbeditha — were Sherira and Hai (Haaja), to whom later generations gave the name of “the fathers and teachers of Israel.”

Sherira, son of the Gaon Chanina (born 930, died 1000), was of noble parentage both on his father's and mother's side, several members of both families having filled the office of Gaon. He boasted that he could trace his descent from the line of the exilarchs before that of Bostanai. The seal of the Sherira family bore the impress of a lion, which is said to have been the coat-of-arms of the Jewish kings.

Sherira was a Gaon of the old school, who valued the Talmud above everything, and steered clear of philosophical ideas. He was sufficiently acquainted with the Arabic language to answer questions in it which were directed to him by the Jewish communities in Moslem countries. He preferred, however, to make use of the Hebrew and Chaldee languages, and had no taste for Arabic literature. His literary activity was entirely devoted to the Talmud and to cognate subjects. He did not trouble himself much with Biblical exegesis, but his earnestness makes us overlook his lack of higher culture. As a judge he always endeavoured to elicit the truth and to decide accordingly. As head of the school he spared no pains to spread instruction far and near, hence his decisions are so voluminous. But Sherira kept most conscientiously to the Talmud in his decisions, and on one occasion blamed a master who taught his young slave the Bible, and, when he had grown up, allowed him to contract an illegal marriage with another slave, which was contrary to the decision of several Talmudical teachers. Sherira was an adept in mysticism, which had but few followers at his time.

Sherira's chief claim to fame may be ascribed

to his letter, which is the main authority for the history of the Talmudical, post-Talmudical, and Gaonic periods of Jewish history. Jacob ben Nissim (Ibn-Shahin), a pupil of the Chushiel who had been taken captive to Africa, and who taught the Talmud in Kairuan, sent a letter of historic import in the name of the community of Kairuan to Sherira. In it the following questions were propounded: — “In what way was the Mishna written down? If the tradition is of remote origin, how comes it that only authorities of a comparatively recent period are known to us as bearers of the same? In what order were the various books of the Mishna compiled?” Jacob also asked about the order of the Saboraim and the Geonim, and about their respective functions. Sherira, on that occasion, wrote an answer (987) half in Hebrew and half in Chaldee, in which he threw light upon several dark portions of Jewish history with surprising clearness. The chronicle of the Saboraim and Geonim as given by him is our guide for this epoch. Sherira shows himself in this historical response as a real chronicler, and imbued with the necessary truth and trustworthiness. But his opinions about the Exilarchs of the line of Bostanai, and about some of his contemporaries, *e.g.*, about Aaron Ibn-Sarjadu, are not of an unprejudiced character. We have to thank the Gaon Sherira for the continuity in the thread of Jewish history from the period of the conclusion of the Talmud till his own time. It was not in his power to produce an historical work of a critical character, nor was this possible for the genius of the Middle Ages.

In spite of his incessant activity as head of the school, he was still unable to prevent the decay of the School of Pumbeditha. The zeal for the study of the Talmud and scientific activity had suddenly cooled in the Babylonian countries.

The academy had so few scholars at this time that Sherira was compelled to promote his young son Hai, who was only sixteen years old, to the high office of chief judge. The respect for the Gaon had vanished. Some malicious persons accused Sherira before the then Alkadir on some now unknown charge, though it was probably on account of his severe administration (997). In consequence of this father and son were arrested. All their property was confiscated, and there was not sufficient left to them for their bare livelihood. They were, however, liberated at the intercession of an influential man and restored to their dignity. Sherira soon after abdicated in favour of his son on account of old age (998), and died a few years later.

His son Hai, although he was only 36 years old, was so popular that at the conclusion of the reading of the Law on Sabbath, they added in his honour, the portion where Moses asked God to appoint a worthy successor to him, and at the conclusion they inserted the words: "And Hai sat on the throne of Sherira his father, and his kingdom was firmly established."

We turn gladly from the decay of the internal organisation of the Jews in the East to the vitality of the communities on the Guadalquivir and the Guadiana. Numerous and various forces spread themselves in all directions, and made visible the best of Jewish culture. There now arose in the Jewish communities of Andalusia a true zeal for the various branches of knowledge, and a great eagerness was displayed for creative activity.

The seed which was sown by Chasdaï, the Jewish Mæcenas, by the study of the Talmud under Moses the Babylonian, and the poetical and philological works of Menachem and Dunash, produced the fairest fruit. Varied knowledge was considered to

be the most beautiful ornament of a man amongst the Spanish Jews as well as amongst the Andalusian Moslems, and brought its possessor honour and riches. Following the example of Abdul-Rahman the Great, the Moslems admitted Jews to State offices, owing to their superior insight and business capacity; thus we find both Jewish consuls and ministers in Mahometan and Christian courts. These potentates emulated the conduct of Chasdaï in encouraging learning and poetry. Their knowledge itself was neither one-sided nor barren; on the contrary, it was full of healthy life, they strove to render it useful and productive. The cultured Jews of Andalusia spoke and wrote the language of the country as fluently as their Arab fellow-citizens, who were as proud of the Jewish poets as the Jews themselves.

If the literary activity of the Andalusian Jews became divided into several branches, into a deeper knowledge of the Bible (exegesis and grammar); into a study of the Talmud, philosophy and poetry, it did not follow that those who pursued one branch were necessarily separated from those of another. Those who studied the Talmud were neither indifferent to the knowledge of the Bible nor to poetry, and if not poets themselves, they yet found pleasure in the rhythmic compositions of the new Hebrew poesy. The philosophers, too, endeavoured to become thoroughly versed in the Talmud, and in many instances Rabbis were at the same time teachers of philosophy.

Nor were science and art only the ornaments of the Spanish Jews, but these acquirements exalted and ennobled their lives. Many of them were filled with that enthusiasm and ideality which does not allow the approach of any kind of meanness. The prominent individuals, who, either through their political position or their other merits stood at the head of the Jewish affairs in Spain, were for the most

part perfect characters of the noblest kind, and penetrated by the highest sentiments. While they were as chivalrous as the Andalusian Arabs, they excelled them in magnanimity, a characteristic which they retained long after the Arabs had become degenerate and had lost it. Like their neighbours they had a keen sense of their own personality, which showed itself in a long string of names, but this self-consciousness rested on a firm moral basis. They had great pride in their ancestry, and certain families, as those of Ibn-Ezra, Alfachar, Alnakvah, Ibn-Falyaj, Ibn-Giat, Benveniste, Ibn-Migash, Abulafia, and others formed the nobility. They did not, however, seek any privileges on account of their birth, but saw therein an obligation to excel in knowledge and nobility, so as to be worthy of their ancestors. The height of culture, which was only attained by the nations of modern times, was not unknown to the Jews of Spain at their most flourishing period. Their religious life was elevated and idealised through this higher culture. They loved their religion with all the fervour of conviction and enthusiasm. Every institution of Judaism as prescribed in the Bible and as explained in the Talmud was considered holy and inviolable by them; but they were equally opposed to stolid bigotry and to senseless fanaticism. Although they often carried their investigation near to the borders of unbelief, yet there is scarcely one of the Jewish-Spanish thinkers who crossed these bounds, nor did extravagant mysticism find favour with them, at least during the flourishing period. No wonder, then, if the Jews of Spain were looked upon with more respect than their brethren in the uncultured European and other lands—in France, Germany, and Italy. The communities out of Spain willingly yielded them the precedence which was formerly enjoyed by the Babylonian academies. Cordova, Lucena, and Grenada soon took the place of Sora

and Pumbaditha. The official chief of the Jews in Andalusia was Chanoch, of whom we have already spoken (940-1014). He succeeded to the Rabbinate after his father. His rival, Joseph ben Isaac Ibn-Abitur (Ibn-Satanas or Santas), a member of a respected Andalusian family, was as learned in the Talmud, and excelled him in the extent of his knowledge. Ibn-Abitur was able to write in verse. He wrote poetical compositions for the Day of Atonement, but his verse is harsh, awkward, and altogether devoid of poetic charm. He had not profited by the poetry of Dunash. Joseph Ibn-Abitur understood the Arabic language so well that he was able to translate the Mishna into that language. The Caliph Alhakem had expressed a wish to possess a translation of the work containing the sources of Jewish tradition, and Ibn-Abitur gratified that wish to his satisfaction. The refined Caliph probably only desired to increase his library (which was of such proportions that the catalogue took up twelve volumes) by the addition of the Mishna, which was so valued by the Jews. The men most distinguished in philology and Hebrew poetry during the period after Chasdaï were the pupils of Menachem and Dunash. They carried on a controversy with each other in epigrams in prose and verse. Of these Isaac Ibn-Jikatila was a poet, and Jehuda Ibn-Daud a Hebrew grammarian. The last of these, Ibn-Zachariah Yachya Chayuj, descended from a family which came from Fez, was the first to place Hebrew philology on a firm basis, and may be regarded as the first scientific grammarian. Chayuj, too, was the first to recognise that Biblical Hebrew roots consist of three letters, and that several consonants (the liquids, semi-vowels, and the letters produced by the same organ) became assimilated and changed into vowels. He thereby made it possible to know the different forms and their changes, and to apply this knowledge to poetry. Chayuj thus brought about

a complete reform in the Hebrew language, and illumined the darkness wherein his predecessors, and amongst them Saadiah, Menachem, and Dunash, and even to a greater extent the Karaites, had been encompassed. Chayuj wrote his grammatical works in Arabic, reckoning particularly upon his countrymen. It was on this account that they remained unknown to the Jews out of Spain, and these, in so far as they busied themselves with the study of philology, kept to the imperfect systems of Menachem and Dunash.

Although the Rabbinate of Cordova was merely an honorary office, and Chanoch who filled it derived no income from it, there yet arose disputes about it when Chasdai died. The followers of Joseph Ibn-Abitur, amongst whom were the numerous Ibn-Abitur family, and the brothers Ibn-Jau, silk manufacturers who were employed at Court, endeavoured to put their favourite at the head of affairs. The greater portion of the Jews of Cordova clung to Chanoch. The quarrel became too serious to be peaceably settled, and both parties appealed to the Caliph on behalf of their favourite. Seven hundred influential men, partisans of Chanoch, betook themselves, in festive apparel, for several days continuously to Az-Zahra, Alhakem's residence, which was not far from Cordova, in order to obtain the Caliph's favour for their own Rabbi.

The opposition party made up for their lack in numbers by their greater zeal. Alhakem decided in favour of the majority, and confirmed Chanoch in his Rabbinate. But when Ibn-Abitur would not relinquish his claim he was excommunicated by the victorious party. In spite of this he did not abandon hope. He appealed in person to the Caliph, whom he hoped to gain over through his knowledge of Arabic literature, and through the service he had rendered him by translating the Mishna, and so to effect a reversal of the decree. But his hopes were

vain. The Caliph addressed him in the words:—
“If my subjects despised me, as the community of Cordova despise you, I would abdicate my kingdom. My only advice to you is to emigrate.” The wish of the Caliph appeared to Ibn-Abitur as a command, and he left Cordova (975). When he saw that he could not gain any followers in Spain, he set sail for Africa, traversed Maghreb, the Fatimidic dominion, and probably also Egypt, without finding favour anywhere. Meanwhile, however, affairs suddenly took a favourable turn for Ibn-Abitur. One of his chief supporters was raised to a high position, and used his influence on his behalf. This man was the silk manufacturer, Jacob Ibn-Jau, the fluctuating character of whose career bears witness to the arbitrariness that existed in the Spanish Caliphate after the death of the last just and cultured Caliph, Alhakem (976).

The title of Caliph appears to have descended to his son Hischam, a sickly youth, but the chief power lay in the hands of Mahomet Almansur, the terror of the Christians in the North-Spanish mountains and of the Africans in their fortresses. Under this Mahometan “Major domus,” Jacob Ibn-Jau, the supporter of Ibn-Abitur, obtained great respect, and a certain power over the Jewish-Spanish community. The circumstances of his good fortune are rather extraordinary. Jacob Ibn-Jau and his brother Joseph supplied the court with costly embroidered silk. Their goods were admired and sought after. They came in contact with Almansur through their business relations, and on one occasion found a considerable sum of money in the court of his palace, which had been left by some provincials who had been ill-treated. The brothers Ibn-Jau did not apply the money for their own purposes, but spent it in presents to the young Caliph and Almansur, so as to make them favourable to their cause, and to procure the recall of the

banished Ibn-Abitur. Their attempt succeeded. In 985, Almansur nominated the elder brother Jacob as prince and chief judge of the various Jewish communities in the kingdom of the Andalusian Caliphate on both sides of the strait from Segelmessa in Africa as far as the Douro. He alone was to have the right to appoint judges and Rabbis in the communities, and to determine the taxes for State purposes, and for communal wants, and to have a sort of court. Jacob Ibn-Jau had eighteen pages in his retinue, and drove about in a state carriage. The community of Cordova, proud of the distinction shown to one of its own members, recognised him as its chief, paid homage to him, and made his office hereditary, while poets sang his praises.

As soon as Ibn-Jau was nominated chief of the Jews of the Andalusian Caliphate he sought to carry into effect his wishes, on account of which he had sought the favour of the court. He gave Chanoch notice to cease from continuing his Rabbinical functions, warning him in case he disobeyed that he would have him carried to a ship without a rudder, and which should be allowed to drift to sea, *i.e.*, which should carry him to the place from whence he came. Ibn-Jau next made preparations to recall his favourite, Ibn-Abitur, and to invest him with the dignity of the Rabbinate. But before he could do that the ban of excommunication had to be removed, and for this act the consent and approval of the whole community were required. Out of regard for Ibn-Jau, who was respected at court, several members, amongst whom were his former opponents, sent a flattering letter to Ibn-Abitur. In it he was invited to accept the Rabbinate of Cordova. Chanoch was deposed. When the community of Cordova, and especially his friends, had made preparations to receive Ibn-Abitur in a worthy manner, they received a letter from him which speedily undeceived them. He inveighed, in harsh terms,

against their reckless treatment of his opponent. He praised Chanoch in unmeasured terms, saying that in all his wanderings he had never met with a man like him for virtue and piety, and, at the same time, advising the community of Cordova to reinstate him into his office.

Meanwhile Ibn-Jau could not maintain his authority. His patron, Almansur, in addition to deposing him, cast him into prison, the reason of his condemnation being his character for probity and disinterestedness. The regent (Hajib) had believed that the Jewish prince would use his power over the communities of the west Caliphate for the purpose of extorting money, and that he would send him rich presents ; but Ibn-Jau did not burden the community, and, consequently, could not satisfy Almansur's avarice. For this he was deprived of his liberty. After he had been imprisoned for a year he was set free by the Caliph Hischam, and restored to his former dignity (987). Since, however, Almansur was unfavourable to him, his position was practically worthless. When Ibn-Jau died, one of Chanoch's relatives hastened to convey the news to him, and thought that he would receive it with joy. But this noble Rabbi wept at the death of his enemy, and said, "Who will now care for the wants of the poor like him who has just departed ? I cannot take his place, for I myself am poor."

Chanoch survived his opponent for several years, and lived to see the first decay of Cordova, and the first general persecution of his co-religionists in Germany, Africa, and in the East. He died through the fall of the reading-desk in the Synagogue, which he ascended on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (September, 1014).

The condition of the Jews in France and Germany at this time shows how dependent their spiritual welfare was upon external circumstances.

During the feeble rule of the last Carlovingsians, and even under the first Capets in France, when the temporal and spiritual vassals became more powerful than the kings, and also under the emperors of Saxony, the Jews were oppressed, and their literary activity almost entirely checked. It was long since they had been allowed to fill offices, forbidden, as they were, through the canonical decrees. They did not seek for honour, but only desired to be allowed to live quietly, and to observe their religion. But the chiefs of the Church disturbed their peaceful condition without any profit to themselves. In the French territory the chief power lay in the hands of the barons and the clergy. The power of the kings was as yet limited on all sides, and could not protect the Jews from dictatorial caprice. The fanatical clergy formerly had only dogmatic prejudices against the Jews, but their zeal produced additional enmity to them from the side of the people, who, being slaves to superstition, looked upon the sons of Israel as a cursed race unworthy of compassion. They accused the Jews of possessing evil spells which they used to the detriment of the Christians. When the king Hugh Capet died of a dangerous illness (996), after he had been treated by a Jewish physician, the people gave credence to the report that the Jews had murdered him. The chroniclers, too, looked upon this as a fact, and entered it in their annals.

The Jews, it is true, had fields and vineyards, but they lacked personal safety, which could only be secured them by a strong government. In the south of France, in Provence and Languedoc, where the king's power was insignificant, the fate of the Jews was still more dependent upon the caprice of the counts and viscounts. In one place they possessed landed property and salt mines, and were even allowed to become High Bailiffs (Bailli), in

another they had to submit to be treated as bondsmen. The chief community was that of Narbonne. There had been a Talmudical school here since the time of Charles the Great, but it does not seem to have been well supported. There suddenly appeared on the scene a Talmudist from the School of Sora, who instilled a true zeal for the study of the Talmud into the Jews of southern France. This man, perhaps, was Nathan bar Isaac, the Babylonian. But it was more probably his pupil Leon or Leontin (Jehuda ben Meïr), who, although he left no written works behind him, was yet the first founder of the scientific study of the Talmud, which henceforth flourished in France and Germany. His famous pupil Gershom confessed that he owed all his knowledge to Leon.

The Jews in Germany at this time did not suffer oppression under the emperors of Saxony, though they were not specially favoured. The feudal system which existed in Germany forbade them to possess landed property, and thus compelled them to be tradesmen. Jew and merchant were synonymous in Germany. The rich were bankers, those of moderate means borrowed money in order to visit the fair at Cologne, for which loan they had to pay a low, reasonable interest. The German emperors continued the custom, which had been introduced by the first Carolingians, of exacting a fixed tribute from the Jews. When Otto the Great wished to grant a subsidy to the newly-built church at Magdeburg he made it a present of the revenue he derived from "the Jews and other merchants" (965). Otto II. likewise presented "the Jews of Merseberg" to the bishop of that town in 981. In the retinue of this emperor was an Italian Jew, Kalonymos, who was greatly attached to him, and on one occasion stood him in good stead when he was in danger of his life (982). But the much-praised rule of the Ottos gave the Jews,

who were subject to them, no chance of raising themselves from their lowly position. The Christian peoples had learnt much from the Arabs, but they had not learnt to encourage science amongst members of religions different from their own. The German Jews in consequence, although they led more moral and industrious lives than their Christian brethren, were not more cultured. They had not even any Talmudical teachers of note of their own, but got them from abroad. Their first Talmudical authority was Gershom. He, together with his brother Machir, spread the seeds of Talmudic knowledge from the South of France to the Rhine, and gave it an importance that it had never obtained even in the Gaonic schools.

Gershom ben Jehuda (born 960, died 1028) came from France, and emigrated for some unknown reason to Mayence. As already stated he was a pupil of Leon. In Mayence Gershom founded a school which soon attracted numerous pupils from Germany and Italy. The respect for Gershom was so great that he was named "The Light of the Exiles." He expounded the Talmud to his pupils with a lucidity unattained by any of his predecessors. He also wrote some very lucid commentaries to the Talmud.

Gershom was the first commentator of the vast Talmud, and he who knows the difficulty of such a work will appreciate how much energy, devotion, and patience were required for it. He was at once recognised as an authority by the German, French, and Italian communities. Questions were submitted to him, and he unconsciously rivalled the last Gaon Hai, although he looked upon him with the reverence of a pupil. Through a peculiar combination of circumstances those who respected the Gaonate most contributed to its decay. Gershom's commentaries on the Talmud, written in Hebrew, effected that the Gaonic School could be dispensed

with, and thus severed the German and North-French communities from it. Any one who chose to do so could, by himself, obtain a deep knowledge of the Talmud, and did not require the aid of response from Babylonia. Gershom was the first of the learned Jews of Germany acquainted with the Masorah which was the first step for understanding Hebrew grammar.

Gershom became even more famous through his decrees than through his commentaries. They produced a very wholesome effect upon German and French Judaism. Amongst other things he forbad polygamy, which was usual even amongst European Jews, and only allowed it in extreme cases. He decreed further that the consent of the wife was necessary for a divorce, whilst, according to the Talmud, the husband could give her a bill of divorce against her wish. He also made an important rule about the carrying of letters, viz., that the bearer must not read a letter, even though it be not sealed. In those times intercourse with one's friends was carried on by means of travellers who happened to be going in the direction required. Hence this regulation was of the utmost importance. Those who transgressed this decree were to be laid under the ban of excommunication. Although these and other institutions were without synodal formality, and the author of them was in no way invested with official authority, they were yet received by the German and French communities as decrees of the Synhedrion, and scrupulously obeyed. So great was the respect shown to Gershom.

Contemporary with this authority of the German-French communities there lived in Mayence a man whose merits were as yet unknown. This man was Simon ben Isaac ben Abun, of French descent, from Le Mans. He was learned in the Talmud, on which subject he wrote a complete work (Yessod). He was in addition a skilful and prolific Hebrew poet

(Poetan), and wrote a number of liturgical compositions in the style of Kaliri, as difficult and ungraceful as his, in which he introduced the Hagadic literature, often in an enigmatical way. Simon ben Isaac was wealthy, and was thus able to avert the storm which had gathered, and which threatened to break over the Jews of Germany.

In the eleventh century the first persecutions of the Jews in Germany occurred. It is possible that the fact of the conversion of a clergyman to Judaism, which the chroniclers mentioned in their annals as an unlucky event, roused the anger of the clergy against the Jews. The convert, whose name was Wecelinus, was chaplain to the Duke Conrad, a relative of the emperor. After his conversion to Judaism (1005), Wecelinus wrote a lampoon on his former religion, which bears witness to his own great hatred of Christianity, and to the coarseness of the taste of the time. The Emperor Henry, however, was so angry at the conversion of the chaplain, that he commissioned one of his clergy to write a reply. This he did, and it was couched in equally coarse and undignified language. Some years later (1012), the Emperor decreed that the Jews should be expelled from Mayence. In addition to this they were to be branded so that they might not be baptized. The decree was probably not confined to Mayence, but doubtless applied to other communities. The poet, Simon ben Isaac, composed dirges for that occasion as for a terrible persecution which would cause Judaism to be forgotten in the hearts of its followers.

Gershom, too, though by no means a poet, gave utterance to his grief at the severe persecution of Henry II. "Thou hast made those who despise thy Law," he says, "to have dominion over thy people; they bow down to senseless images, and would compel us, too, to worship them. They oppress thine inheritance, so that they may change thee for

a God of their own making. They are determined no longer to call thee God, and to overthrow thy word. If I say, 'Far be it from me to forsake the God of my fathers,' they gnash their teeth, put forth their hand for plunder, and open their mouth in scoffing. Thy people are driven from their homes, they raise their eyes in longing to thee.'" During this persecution many Jews became Christians either to save their lives or their possessions. Amongst these was Gershom's son. When the latter died, still being a Christian, his hapless father observed the mourning ceremonials for him as for one who had died a Jew.

Simon ben Isaac, through bribing the officials with large sums of money, and after displaying much zeal, succeeded in staying the persecution, and even in obtaining permission for the Jews to settle again in Mayence. Those Jews who had been compelled to submit to baptism now gladly returned to their religion, and Gershom protected them from the reproach which some would have attached to them, on account of their temporary apostasy, by excommunicating anyone who should do so.

The grateful community were anxious to perpetuate the memory of Simon. They did this by mentioning his name in the synagogue every Sabbath, adding, "that he had exerted himself on behalf of his brethren, and that through him persecutions had ceased." The name of Gershom was likewise perpetuated by them, because "he had enlightened those in exile through his decrees."

The school that had been founded by Gershom in Mayence flourished for more than 180 years, and became the centre of Talmudic activity for Germany, France and Italy. At the same time, about the end of the fourth century of the Hejira, when the Karaites expected the coming of the Messiah, persecution broke out against the Jews in the East and

in Egypt, which lasted longer than it had in Germany. The German Jews had been persecuted because they did not believe in Christ and the saints ; the Eastern Jews were now oppressed because they would not believe in Mahomet, and the godlike Imam, and in the heavenly guide (Mahdi).

This persecution originated from the mad Egyptian Caliph Hakim, who has been called "The Mahometan Caius Caligula," and who believed that he was the incarnation of the Divine power, and that he was the real representative of God on earth. Hakim persecuted all who dared to doubt his divinity—Mahometans, Jews, and Christians without distinction. At first he decreed that if the Jews of his dominion did not become converts to the Shiitic Islam, they should wear round their necks the image of a calf in commemoration of the golden calf of their ancestors in the wilderness. In addition to this they were to be further distinguished from the believers just as they had been in the days of Omar. Those who transgressed were to be punished by exile, and by the loss of all their possessions (1008). A similar regulation was enacted against the Christians. When Hakim heard that the Jews obeyed his decree, and wore the prescribed golden images, he added a further clause, viz., that they should wear in addition a block of wood six pounds in weight, and have little bells attached to their garments that they might be known in the distance as unbelievers (1010). He afterwards ordered the churches and synagogues to be destroyed, and drove both Jews and Christians out of his kingdom (1014). The Fatimide dominions at that time were very extensive. They embraced Egypt, North Africa, Palestine, and Syria, and since Hakim had also adherents in the Caliphate of Bagdad, there were but few places of refuge open to the Jews. Many, therefore, were compelled to adopt Islam, at least in their external

demeanour, and in that condition waited for better times. The persecution lasted till the Mahometans themselves grew tired of the half-witted Caliph, whom they assassinated (1020).

Meanwhile the storms of persecution had swept away the blossoms of culture which were just springing up in the Jewish communities in the Fatimide dominions in Africa; in fact, they had scarcely time to shoot up. According to Israeli and Dunash ben Tamim, only two of the men who came from this quarter attained to prominence as rabbis with scientific ideas, and after their death there remained a gap which was not filled up. Both of these, viz., Chananel, the son of Chushiel, who had emigrated to that place, and the pupil of the latter, Nissim bar Jacob Ibn-Shahin (1015-1055), lived in one place, and are often named together, but they do not appear to have been on friendly terms with each other. On the contrary, there appears to have been the same mutual rivalry between them as there had been between Janach and Ibn-Abitur, Nissim, like the latter, being a native, and Chananel, like the former, the son of an alien. We are not even certain which of the two was the official rabbi of Kairuan; both of them, however, presided over the school. Chananel, in addition, had a large business; whilst Nissim was so poor that he had to be supported by the Jewish minister of that time in Granada. Both, however, showed a remarkable similarity in their ideas; both adopted the same studies, and wrote works on the same studies, but Chananel made use of the Hebrew language and Nissim of Arabic. Both added a new element to the study of the Talmud, by which means they established it on a firmer basis than that on which the Geonim had been able to place it.

The Jerusalem Talmud, although more ancient than the Babylonian, had suffered considerably by the fate to which books as well as men were exposed.

Whilst the Babylonian Talmud was known and studied as far as Chorasán and India in the East, and as far as the end of the Ancient World in the West, its companion remained for a long time unknown outside of its birthplace. The former had commentators, who explained and expounded it thoroughly; the latter was for a long time neglected. In consequence of the connection of North Africa with Palestine, which was brought about through its conquest by the Fatimide Caliphs, the Jewish teachers of both lands came in contact with each other, and the Talmud of the Holy Land (as it was called) became known in Kairuan. The two great Talmudists, Chananel and Nissim, first occupied themselves with it in Talmudic circles. In their Talmudical writings, which consisted partly of commentaries, explanations of separate words and the subject matter, and partly of practical decisions, they gave significance to the Jerusalem Talmud. Both of them wrote commentaries to the Pentateuch, in which they followed the path marked out by Saadiah for rational exposition of difficult passages in the Pentateuch.

They were both in constant communication with Babylonia on the one hand and with Spain on the other, and formed, so to speak, the centre for both lands. They lived to see the utter extinction of the Gaonate, but after their death the school of Kairuan sank into the utmost insignificance. One of its pupils, who afterwards became famous as a Rabbinical authority, owed his fame solely to his emigration to Spain.

The institutions, too, and the traditions of the Babylonian-Persian Judaism showed manifest signs of decay at this time. They possessed, it is true, two men of extraordinary ability, viz., Hai and Samuel ben Chofni, but these were not in a position to stay its dissolution, and could only throw a dim light upon the dying Gaonate.

Haï (or Haya, born 969, died 1038) raised to high dignity in his 18th year, succeeded his father Sherira in the Gaonate of Pumbaditha when he was thirty years old. At his installation his name was mentioned when a portion from the prophets was publicly read. He was compared to King Solomon, and enjoyed a high prerogative, which foreign communities, as well as the Babylonians, ceded to him. His character was as noble as his thought was independent. He was at home in all branches of sciences as they were then taught, and displayed great literary activity in many of them. Haï reminds us of Saadiah, whom he took as his model, and whom he defended from attacks, but he was more a Talmudist, whereas Saadiah was a religious philosopher. Like him Haï was a competent Arabic scholar, and made use of that language as a medium for many of his letters, and he also treated numerous scientific subjects in it. Like the Gaon of Fayum he was free from that narrow-minded exclusiveness which can only see the truth in one's own religion, and which looks upon everything outside as untrue. He was friendly with the head of the Eastern Christians of Bagdad, and on one occasion, when in his exegetical lectures he came upon a difficulty, he did not hesitate to seek a solution from the Patriarch (Mar-Elia I.).

In his explanation of rare and archaic words in the Bible, Haï boldly sought assistance from the Koran and the old traditions of the Mahometans in order to confirm their meaning. He was an unprejudiced sage, who loved the light, and avoided darkness. He often had disputations with Mahometan theologians about the relation between Judaism and Islam, and is said to have often brought them to silence by his eloquence. His main study, however, was the Talmud, and in this he resembled his father Sherira, except that

he rendered more service to it than his predecessor. He wrote a scanty commentary, in which he explained the words in the most difficult portions of the Mishna and Talmud.

Haï treated of civil rights according to the Talmud, of contracts, loans, the fixing of boundary marks, and of oaths, with systematic precision. He did this as no one before him had done, and he therefore became the model and authority for later generations. He did not enter upon the field of metaphysics, but although he was not a philosopher, he had sound opinions as to the value of belief in mysticism. When it is surrounded with a halo of religion, this belief often appears reasonable to those of weak reasoning powers, but Haï perceived its deceptive character.

The belief in miracles has captivated the multitude in every country, at all times, and in all forms of religious opinion, and has prevented men from considering aright the order of the world and the Divine wisdom. This belief was fostered by the Jews in many ways, and had taken as firm a hold on them as it had on the Christian and the Mahometan world. It was especially prevalent in Palestine and Italy. Its devotees believed that anyone who was truly pious could perform at will miracles as great and surprising as those of the prophets of old. They thought, however, that for this purpose it was necessary to pronounce certain magical formulæ, consisting of various combinations of the letters in the name of God. Haï's true religious insight could only see a desecration of religion in this belief, against which he wrote with great indignation, although his father was not free from it. A pupil of Jacob ben Nissim of Kairuan had once asked Haï what opinion we ought to adopt concerning the magical power of the name of God, which many boasted they could make use of. Haï answered briefly yet judiciously: — “If

any one by the mere use of formulæ could perform miracles, and thereby alter the course of nature, in what were the prophets distinguished?" God gave the prophets the power of temporarily altering the laws of nature that they might prove themselves the true messengers of God. Now, if any pious persons could do the same, and if there happened to be many of them, miracles would become daily occurrences, and the motion of the sun from west to east would no longer strike us as being extraordinary—in short, miracles would cease to be miracles. It was wrong, he said, to make use of the name of God for such purposes, and he warned people against it, for there is little certainty in it, but much doubt, and that man must be indeed foolish who believes everything. Hai was universally acknowledged as an authority, and through his influence the School of Pumbaditha somewhat recovered its prestige.

The great scholars Nissim, Chananel of Kairuan, the community of Fez, the vizir Samuel Nagid, Gershom of Mayence, the authority of the German Jews, and the other authorities of the communities of three parts of the world, submitted questions to him, and respected him as the chief of Judaism. He was called "the father of Israel." The Exilarchate had been practically extinct since the death of the grandson of David ben Zaccai, and Hai stood at the head of Judaism. No fitter man could have been found to represent it. Unlike the former Geonim of Pumbaditha, who all looked askance at the sister academy, unlike his father who felt a keen delight when Sora was without a chief, Hai did his best to give it a leader, viz., Samuel ben Chofni, who filled his office during Hai's Gaonate. Samuel was his father-in-law, and was as learned and distinguished for piety as himself. He wrote several systematic works on the ritual, and a commentary on the Pentateuch, in which he held the same philo-

sophical views about the unity of God as the followers of the Mutazilitic School. His commentary on the Pentateuch is not very famous. It was, like the Karaite commentaries, very diffuse, and contained discussions on questions out of relation to the subject. But although his exegetical works mark no distinct progress, yet too much importance cannot be given to the fact that the Geonim followed the line laid down by Saadiah to treat of Jewish subjects in a scientific way.

Samuel ben Chofni continued to interpret the Bible in a rationalistic manner. He always endeavoured to explain the miraculous events narrated in the Bible as if they were natural. He explained as visions the appearance of God to Samuel, the story of the witch of Endor, and the history of Balaam. He, too, like Saadiah, attacked Karaism, especially as a keen controversy broke out at that time between the Karaites and the Rabbanites. Samuel ben Chofni died four years before his son-in-law Hai (1034), and thus ended the list of Geonim of Sora.

This School does not appear to have made any effort to restore itself after his death. The times were unfavourable to the Gaonate in every way, and it was impossible for it to regain its pristine vigour. When Hai died, in 1038, mourned by all the Jews, and eulogised by the greatest poet of the time—by Ibn-Gebirol, and by his admirer Chananel, in Africa, the time, too, for the dissolution of the School of Pumbaditha had come. It is true that the college immediately chose a successor in whom the functions of Gaon and Exilarch were united, but it ceased to exist when this individual died.

Chiskiya, great grandson of the quarrelsome Exilarch David ben Zaccai, was appointed head of the school. But the splendour which it was thought would accrue to the school through him could not

make itself visible. Chiskiya had many implacable enemies who envied his office. They slandered him at the Court, for what reason or pretext is unknown. The political power of the Eastern Caliphate was in the hands of Jelal Addaulah at that time. He had terrified Jews and Christians into giving the title of "King of kings" to the powerless Caliph, and exacted tribute from them in his name. This great Sultan may have made use of the just or unjust complaint against Chiskiya for his own profit. The last Gaon was imprisoned, tortured probably that he might discover his treasures, robbed of all his property, and then executed (1040). Thus the Gaonate came to an end through the oppression of the weak Caliphate. Babylonia's part in Jewish history was played out, and sank into complete oblivion for a long time. Information was likewise laid against Chiskiya's two sons. They escaped, and after travelling about for a long time settled in Spain, where they were respected as being the last members of the House of David. They here devoted themselves to poetry, and were known under the name Ibn-Daudi.

Jewish Spain now inherited all the authority of Judæa, Babylonia, and North Africa, and increased its inheritance manifold for succeeding generations. There the exiled sons of the Jewish-Chazarian princes, and of the Exilarchs, found rest. At the head of the community of Andalusia was Samuel Ibn-Nagrela (or Nagdela), a man distinguished by wisdom, virtue and position, who is the first of the Jewish teachers after the Geonim. He united in his person all the virtues of the three men who made Jewish-Spain famous. He was at once a Chasdai, a generous chief and a patron of learning, like Moses ben Chanoch a thorough Talmudist, and like Dunash ben Labrat a poet and grammarian.

The life of Samuel (Ishmael) Halevi Ibn-Nagrela

was a remarkable one. He was born in Cordova (in 993), whither his father had emigrated from Merida, and studied the Talmud in the school of Chanoch. Jehuda Chayuj, the father of Hebrew philology, instructed him in the subtleties of the Hebrew language, and the Andalusian capital, which was then the centre of culture, offered him sufficient opportunity to make himself a thorough master of Arabic. When he was 20 years old, in consequence of civil war, he and many others were obliged to quit Cordova. The Barbary chieftain, Suleiman, in the battle with the Arabs and the Sclavonian body-guard of the Caliphs, whom he conquered, destroyed with African fury the beautiful buildings of the capital, permitted the women to be violated, and reduced the richest families to beggary (April, 1013).

The noblest Jewish families emigrated to Granada, Toledo, and even as far as Saragossa, to escape this persecution. Samuel Ibn-Nagrela settled in the port of Malaga.

He had a small business, and also pursued the study of the Talmud and languages. Besides Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldee, he also understood four other languages, including Latin, Castilian and the Berber tongue. Unlike the other Jews who mostly wrote Arabic in Hebrew characters, Ibn-Nagrela was a master of Arabic caligraphy, an art on which the Arabs laid great value. To his knowledge of languages and caligraphy he owed the high position which he held, and which had never been attained by any other Jew since the destruction of the Jewish state.

Civil wars and the ambition of the Emir had broken up the Government of the Ommeyadan Caliphs into small territories. In Andalusia, after the destruction of the Ommeyades, there followed a division into small principalities, similar to that in Germany and Italy; the Arabian historians

call the Regents of this period the "Kings of Anarchy." One race of Berbers, the Sinhajas, founded a special kingdom in the south of Spain under a leader named Maksen (1020), the family of Dindes. The rich city of Granada, which was populated by Jews, became the capital of this kingdom, and Malaga was also a part of it. In Malaga, the vizir, named Abulkasim Ibn-Alarif, of the second king of Granada (named Habus) had a palace next to Samuel's little shop. This brought good fortune to the poor scholar, and raised him above any fear of poverty, and ultimately exalted him to a height worthy of his greatness.

A slave of the vizir's always had the letters in which she gave information to him written in the shop of the poor Jew. These letters displayed so much linguistic and caligraphic skill that the Vizir Ibn-Alarif became anxious to know the writer. On learning his name, he took Ibn-Nagrela into his service as private secretary (1025). The vizir soon discovered that Samuel possessed great political insight, and consulted him on all important affairs of State, and as his advice was always sound, the vizir at length undertook nothing without Samuel's concurrence.

When Ibn-Alarif became ill, King Habus was in despair as to what he should do in his complicated relations with the neighbouring States. The dying vizir referred him to his Jewish secretary, confessed that his successful undertakings had been mainly due to his wise suggestions, and advised Habus to employ him as a counsellor. The King of Granada, who had fewer prejudices against the Jews than the Arabian Mussulmans, raised Samuel Ibn Nagrela to the dignity of minister (Katib), and gave him the guidance of diplomatic and military affairs (1027). Thus the shopkeeper of Malaga lived in the king's palace, and had a voice in all matters concerning the

Pyrenean Peninsula. For a Mahometan who chose a vizir ruled occasionally, when the mood seized him, but he did not govern. This was the affair of the chief minister, who had to answer for matters to the king with his head. Habus had no reason to regret his choice. His kingdom flourished under the rule of the wise and active Jewish vizir. Samuel knew how to occupy the king, and how to please him. He composed a poem of praise to Habus in seven different languages. Diplomatic, wise, and always master of himself, Ibn-Nagrela knew how to employ circumstances, and had the art of disarming his opponents. He drew a masterly picture of a worthy governor, which he seems to have used as a guide:—"He whose counsel is as pure as sunlight, whose eyes do not close in sleep, whose thoughts are firm as castles, whose worth shines like armour; he who knows how to subdue the will of others, and who keeps aloof from what brings disgrace, is worthy to rule." His wisdom and piety preserved him from that pride peculiar to those who have risen, and which makes them hateful. The gentleness with which he opposed his enemies is shown in an anecdote. Near the palace of Habus there lived a Mussulman seller of spices, who no sooner beheld the Jewish minister in the company of the king, than he overwhelmed him with curses and reproaches. Habus, indignant at such conduct, commanded Samuel to punish this fanatic by cutting out his tongue. The Jewish vizir, however, knew how to silence him who cursed. He gave him money, and converted the curses into blessings. When Habus again noticed the seller of spices, he was astonished at the change, and questioned Samuel about it. He replied, "I have torn out his angry tongue, and given him instead a kind one." The seller of spices, however, was not his only enemy; there were several others, and very dangerous ones.

The fanatical Mahometans beheld in the elevation of an unbeliever to so high a rank a mockery of their religion. It aroused their displeasure that the numerous Jewish population of the kingdom of Granada should hold its head aloft as though on an equality with the Moslems. Two officers of State, Ibn-Abbas, and Ibn Abi-Musa, plotted to depose him. But their plots failed, and they were condemned to death. Fortune also smiled on this Jewish vizir, although he was almost in danger of losing his position and his life. When King Habus died in 1037 there arose two parties in Granada who rallied round the two princes. Most of the Barbary grandees, and some of the influential Jews, Joseph Ibn Migash, Isaac ben Leon, and Nehemia Ashkafa, sided with the younger son, Balkin (or Bologgin), a smaller party (amongst them Samuel) desired that the elder son named Badis should be the successor. The influential party were ready to hail Balkin as king, when he abdicated in favour of his brother. Badis became king October, 1037, and Samuel not only retained his former position, but became the actual king of Granada, as the pleasure-loving Badis gave but little attention to affairs of government. Later on Balkin repented of his generosity to his brother, and put obstacles in the way of his government. Badis therefore hinted to the physician of Balkin to refrain from giving him medicine in his illness, which led to his death. After his death the government of Badis and the will of Ibn-Nagrela remained undisturbed. Balkin's partisans were forced to leave Granada, and amongst them the three before-mentioned Jews. They emigrated to Seville, and were there received in a friendly manner by the king of that country, Mahomet Aljafer, who was an opponent of the King of Granada. One of the fugitives, Joseph Ibn Migash, was raised by the King of Seville to a high post, and became the ancestor of an im-

portant personage. It is interesting to see in the writings of a contemporary historian how the Jewish Minister formulated the ordination of governors of the Mahometan dominion. Samuel, or as he was called, Ismael Ibn-Nagrela, used the formula of the Moslem governor without scruples. He opened the ordination with the words *Chamdu-l-Ilahi* (praised be God), and added, when mentioning the name of Mahomet, the sentence, "May God pray over him and bless him." He further exhorted those to whom the circulars were addressed to live according to the principles of Islam, in fact his ordinances were couched quite in the Mahometan style.

Without doubt both *Habus* and *Badis* permitted the Jewish vizir to exercise a similar power over the Jewish congregations of Granada, to that which *Chasdai* and *Ibn-Jau* had possessed in Cordova. Samuel was named chief and prince (*Nagid*) of the Jews, and this title is used by Jewish authors. The Minister of State was also the Rabbi; he presided over the school, where he delivered lectures on the Talmud to his disciples. He made judicial decisions on religious questions, and in fact completely filled the functions of a Rabbi of the period. The same pen which wrote out the ordination of a governor was used for treatises and discourses on the Talmud. Samuel Nagid compiled a *Methodology* of the Talmud (*Mebo ha Talmud*), in which he explained clearly the technical expressions of the Talmud. As introduction, he added the chain of traditions and the successive authorities of the Tanaite, Amoraite, Saburaite, and Gaonic schools as far as Moses and Chanoch, his teacher. He afterwards composed a commentary to the whole Talmud for religious practice, which was afterwards highly prized, and was recognised as the standard authority (*Hilcheta Gabriata*). Samuel Ibn-Nagrela was also a Neo-Hebraic poet, and knew how to employ both rhyme and metre skilfully. He composed prayers in

the form of psalms full of religious depth and submission, and called the collection the Younger Psalter (Ben Tehillim). He composed thoughtful sentences and parables, the fruits of his deep observation of men and manners, and called this composition the younger book of Proverbs (Ben Mishle). Lastly he compiled a book of philosophy modelled on that of the Preacher (Ben Kohelet). This work, which was written when he had attained an advanced age, was the most successful of his works, and is full of deep thought and eloquence. He also composed epigrams and songs of praise, but his poetic compositions, both secular and spiritual, are heavy and dull, full of thought, but devoid of beauty of form. They were judged from olden times: "They are cold as the snow of Hermon, or as the songs of the Levite Samuel."

No wonder that such a man of pure integrity and deep appreciation for wisdom and religion should spread blessings around him, should advance wisdom and poetry, and should support knowledge with princely generosity. Samuel stood in connection with the most important men of his time, in Irak, Syria, Egypt, and Africa, especially with the last of the great Geonim, Hai and Nissim, to whom he gave of his riches, permitted them to use books for transcription, which copies he presented to poor students, arousing dormant talents and becoming the protector of his countrymen, far and near; he comforted the great poet of the time, Ibn Gebirol, in his melancholy. A writer of the following generation aptly describes him in the words, "In Samuel's time the kingdom of science was raised from its lowliness, and the star of knowledge once more shone forth; God gave unto him a great mind which reached to the spheres and touched the heavens, so that he might love knowledge and those who pursued her, and that he might glorify her followers."

The position of the Jews, whose co-religionist bore the reins of government, became improved. In no country of the world did they enjoy the same equality in all things as they did in the city of Granada. It was as a ray of sunshine after days of gloom. They were, in fact, more highly favoured by the ruling race of Barbary than the Arabian population, who bore the yoke of Imhay with silent anger, and whose glances were always directed to the neighbouring city of Seville, where a king of pure Arab race wore the crown.

The Minister of State and Rabbi, Ibn Nagrela, occupied himself with researches into the construction of the holy language, but this was his weak point. He did not get beyond the rules laid down by Chayuj. He was so much prepossessed in favour of this master that he had no comprehension of new efforts. Samuel composed twenty-two writings on Hebrew Grammar. Only one, however (Sefer-ha Osher), the "Book of Riches," is worthy of mention. The rest were only occasional pamphlets directed against the great Hebrew linguist, Ibn Janach, towards whom Samuel was unfriendly. This greatest Hebrew linguist of his time—no less an ornament of Spanish Judaism than the vizir, Ibn Nagrela—deserves a special page in Jewish history, especially as for a long time he was little known and wrongly judged. Jonah Marinus (with the Arabic name of Abulvalid Mervan Ibn Janach, born about 995, died 1050) owed his education to Cordova, where in the time after Chasdai all hearts became filled with enthusiasm for knowledge and a devoted love for the holy language. His teacher in Hebrew grammar was Isaac Ibn Jikatilla, of the school of Menachem, and in poetry Isaac Ibn Sahal. He studied medicine in the High School of Cordova, which had been founded by the Caliph Alhakem. In his youth Ibn Janach, like all the rest of the world at that period, made verses, which

even later on when his taste was developed, did not appear to him entirely bad. But he gave up poetising in order to devote himself entirely to the study of the Hebrew language in every branch. He lived entirely for this study, and obtained a mastery of it, which has not up to the present day been surpassed. Posterity has learnt much from Ibn Janach, but students of the Hebrew language can yet learn much more. He also, like his opponent Ibn Nagrela, was compelled to leave Cordova after its destruction under Suleiman of Barbary (1013) when he settled in Saragossa. The Jews of Saragossa were for the most part under the delusion that Rabbinical Judaism would be injured by research, and especially by grammatical investigations. Ibn Janach nevertheless devoted himself to the study of the construction of the Jewish language and to the explanation of the simple words of the Bible. He also pursued the study of medicine both theoretically and practically; but his chief attention was directed to a thorough exegesis of the Bible, and the grammatical part was not the chief end, but simply the means for the better comprehension of Holy Writ. Ibn Janach, in his researches, came upon results not recognised by Chayuj. The alterations which he necessarily had to introduce were made in all modesty and with due recognition of Chayuj's merits, and as he said he prized highly the founder of the inquiry into the Hebrew language, but he must say with Aristotle "that his love of Truth was greater than his love of Plato." This independence of the precepts inculcated by Chayuj aroused the anger of the latter's followers, chief amongst whom was Samuel Ibn Nagrela. With him as well as with others of Chayuj's school there arose a wordy war, which ended in bitter personalities. The two chief dignitaries of Jewish civilisation of this period, the liberal prince and the master of the Hebrew language,

became bitter enemies, and this enmity does not seem ever to have been put aside.

Feeling the approach of age, which Ibn Janach calls with Plato "the mother of forgetfulness," he devoted himself to his chief work, wherein are summed up his researches and the treasures of his inner life. Ibn Janach was not only the creator of Hebrew syntax, but he also brought science to perfection. No one before him, and but few up till the present day, have entered into all the subtleties of the holy language so completely as Ibn Janach. He first drew attention to the ellipses, and to the alternations of letters and verses in the Holy Scriptures, and he was sufficiently daring to explain that various dark and apparently inexplicable expressions were due to the want of a letter or a syllable. He explained over two hundred obscure passages through the supposition that a certain writer had substituted a wrong word for a more fitting one. Through the insertion of the correct word Ibn Janach often gives an intelligible meaning to various verses hitherto foolishly rendered. He was the first rational Biblical critic. Although convinced of the divinity of Holy Writ, he did not, like others, rate the language so highly as to accept sheer nonsense; but he assumed that, even when fully inspired, expressions directed to mankind must be interpreted according to the rules of human usage. Ibn Janach also did not assert that the copyists and punctuators had altered or corrupted the holy literature from a want of apprehension, but that the holy men, as men, had conceded so much to the rest of mankind. He justly called his chief work (which like five others he composed in the Arabic language) "Critique" (*Al Tanchik*) and divided it into two—into grammar with an Exegesis ("Al-Luma' Rikmah"), and a Lexicon ("Kitab Al-Assval").

Although Ibn Janach had many enemies

amongst those who denied his merits, and amongst those who condemned him on account of his heretical conception of the Bible, yet he never mentions them with anger, and, in fact, had it depended on him, the world would never have known of the enmity of Samuel Ibn Nagrela towards him. Ibn Janach was not unacquainted with philosophy. He speaks with knowledge of Plato and Aristotle. He also wrote a book on logic in the Aristotelian spirit. But he was averse to metaphysical researches concerning the relation of God to the world, and first principles, with which his countrymen, and especially Ibn Gebirol, concerned themselves, considering that such matters did not lead to any certain knowledge, but that they undermine belief. Ibn Janach was a clear thinker, and opposed to any enthusiastic or eccentric tendency. He was the opposite of the third of the triumvirate, who lived at this period, Ibn Gebirol, with whom, though they dwelt in the same city, he does not appear to have lived in great harmony.

CHAPTER IX.

IBN GEBIROL AND HIS EPOCH.

Solomon Ibn Gebirol—His early life—His poems—The statesman, Yekutiel Ibn Hassan befriends him—Murder of Yekutiel—Bachya Ibn Pakuda and his moral philosophy—The Biblical critic Yizchaki ben Yasus—Joseph ben Chasdai, the Poet—Death of Samuel Ibn Nagrela—Character of his son, Joseph, and his tragic fate—Death of Ibn Gebirol—The French and German communities—Alfassi—Life and works of Rashi—Jewish scholars in Spain—King Alfonso.

1027—1070 C.E.

AN ideal personage, richly endowed, a poet, and at the same time a great thinker, Solomon Ibn Gebirol (Jebirol), in Arabic named Abu Ayub Sulaiman Ibn Yachya, was born 1021, and died 1070. His father Judah, who lived in Cordova, appears to have migrated together with Ibn Nagrela during the disturbances that befell the city, and to have removed to Malaga. In this place was born and bred the Jewish Plato, by whom so many hearts have been warmed, and from whom many minds have gained light. It appears that Ibn Gebirol lost his parents early, and that they left him without means. His tender, poetical mind, seems to have become saddened from loneliness. He withdrew from the outer world, and became self-concentrated. Poetry and philosophical faith seem like two angels to have overshadowed him with their wings, and to have saved him from despair. But they could not bring joy to his heart; his thoughts remained

serious, and his songs are pervaded by a bitter strain.

At an age when others are not yet ripe, Ibn Gebirol became a finished poet, outshining all his predecessors. One sees in his poems that he had not to seek for word and rhyme, or for thoughts and metaphors, but that all came to him plentifully. He improved the Hebrew metre and softened its tones. The muse which had not yet been personified either in Biblical or neo-Hebraic poetry he depicted in the form of a dove with golden wings and a sweet voice. In his desolation and want the young poet found a comforter and protector in the man who caused Ibn Gebirol's poems to be preserved—Yekutiel Ibn Hassan or Alhassan, who appears to have had a high position in Saragossa, under King Yachya Ibn Mondhir, similar to that held by Samuel Ibn Nagrela in Granada. This man kindly protected the desolate poet, supported him and soothed him with friendliness. Ibn Gebirol poured forth the praises of his patron, under whose protection a more cheerful view of life was disclosed to him.

At this time his muse sang the praises of his patrons, the wisdom and kindness of his friends. His pictures of nature are bright, graphic and spirited.

But fate did not long permit him to enjoy these privileges, his protector was snatched away from him before he could secure a settled existence. Abdallah Ibn Hakam, a cousin of the King Yachya Ibn Mondhir, plotted against his royal cousin, attacked him in his palace, murdered him, and took possession of the treasures. Yachya's favourites were not spared by the conspirators, and Yekutiel Ibn Alhassan was thrown into fetters and killed. Grief at the tragic end of the widely-loved Yekutiel was felt throughout the north of Spain. Ibn Gebirol's grief was without bounds, and his elegy on his benefactor is really stirring and

a pattern of eloquent poetry. The poem numbers more than two hundred verses, and is an honourable memorial both of the departed and of the poet. Ibn Gebirol again fell a prey to melancholy after this incident, and his poetic effusions were clad in a garb of mourning. But what would have borne down another gave him fresh powers, and he now began to approach the summit of his poetic and literary greatness. Making verses was so easy to him that in his nineteenth year (1040) he wrote a Hebrew grammar with all its dry rules, in four hundred verses, even assuming the burden of an acrostic form, and ending with a similar rhyme in every verse (Anak). In the introduction to this poem Ibn Gebirol describes the holy language as one favoured by God, "in which the angel choirs daily praise their Creator, in which God had revealed the Sinaitic Law, the prophets had prophesied and the psalmists had sung." He blamed his countrymen, the men of Saragossa (the blind community), on account of their indifference to pure Hebrew. "One party speaks Idumæan (Romance), and the others the language of Kedar" (Arabic). His versified Hebrew Grammar was intended to awaken a love for the language of the Bible and to give people the means of understanding the laws.

In Saragossa, Ibn Gebirol composed a moral and philosophical work (1045), which, without possessing the depth of his later philosophical works, is characterised by the peculiar spirit which pervades it, and the intimate acquaintance evinced by this young man with the masters of philosophy. By the side of the sayings of Holy Writ and ethical sentences from the Talmud, Ibn Gebirol put the favourite sayings of the "godlike Socrates," of his disciple Plato, of Aristotle, of Arabic philosophers, and more especially those of a Jewish philosopher, Alkuti (perhaps Chepez Alkuti). It is surprising how such a young writer could have had so deep an insight

into the condition of the human soul and worldly affairs. Ibn Gebirol's writings contained bitter allusions to the personages in the community of Saragossa, whom he, no doubt, desired to offend, and of whom he said, "I need not mention names, for they are sufficiently well known." He describes the haughty men, who carry themselves above their fellow-citizens, and who always hold their own counsel for the best, and those who, actually filled with hate, yet bear words of love on their lips. The pamphlet seems to have been a challenge to those men of Saragossa who were his opponents. Ibn Gebirol for this was turned out of Saragossa (in 1045) by the men of influence whom he had embittered.

In return he describes the town as a second Gomorrha in a bitter, heart-rending, mournful poem, which is a distressful cry of desperation in beautiful rhythm. Whither he next went is not known. The unfortunate young poet was so inconsolable that he determined in his indignation to leave Spain altogether, and to go in the direction of Egypt, Palestine, and Babylonia. In a poem he encourages his soul in the resolve to shake off the dust of Spain. He calls to memory the example of the patriarch and of the greatest prophet, who left their native lands, and went to foreign climes. He thus apostrophises Spain :—

"Woe to thee, land of my foes,
In thee I have no portion,
Whether thou dost experience joy or sorrow."

He did not, however, carry out his determination of emigrating, but wandered about in Spain, where he met with real or imaginary misfortunes. He complained of the instability of the time and of his friends, and poured forth his laments in beautiful verses :

"Blame me not for my heavy-flowing tears,
But for them my poor heart would wither.
My wanderings have bereft me of all strength,
A fly could now with ease bear me up."

The tutelar genius of the Spanish Jews, Samuel Ibn Nagrela, appears to have taken an interest in Ibn Gebirol, and to have placed him in a quiet home. For this act Ibn Gebirol extolled Nagrela in melodious lines. Under the powerful protection of the Jewish minister he occupied himself with philosophical studies, which held the place next to poetry in his heart. If poetry was his beloved, philosophy was a mother to him. He thus sings :—

“How could I forsake wisdom,
With whom I have made a covenant !
She is my mother, I her dearest child ;
She is my ornament, the jewel of my neck.
Should I lay aside my beautiful attire?
Whilst yet I live, will my spirit ever
To her heavenly heights raise itself,
And ne’er will I rest till the source I find.”

Ibn Gebirol, whilst yet a child, not only created the most difficult artistic forms of Hebrew poetry, and handled them with playful ease; but, when still a youth, he also established a system of investigation into the deepest problems which concern the human understanding. What is the highest aim of man? Whence spring the existence and origin of the soul, and whither does it depart when it is severed from its earthly dwelling? How is the highest Being to be conceived, and how did He bring into united, perfect existence, the manifold, the corrupt and defective, and the visible world? To these and many other questions Ibn Gebirol sought a reply; but such things are not for the believing heart, but for the critical human mind. The intellect shows to man infinite space, and directs his attention to the invisible spirit world above, and to the concord of the world of thought beneath, so that he may examine them both in their inner relations. In his system Ibn Gebirol developed such an overflowing wealth of ideas, and such vigorous depth of thought, that the thinker must concentrate all his attention in order to be able to follow him. To him, how-

ever, these extremely complicated thoughts, which encircle the whole world from its very origin, and the whole range of the sciences, were so easy and simple, that for everything he found the most fitting word and the most suitable image. Indeed, one portion of these thoughts, he poured forth in a poem—in the form of a prayer (Keter Malchut)—that for sublimity, elevated tone, and truth, has no equal. It is true that the leading ideas of Ibn Gebirol's system had already been expressed by earlier philosophers, but he formed into one organised whole a confused mass of scattered thoughts. He developed his system in a work, written in the Arabic language, in which he was as proficient as in Hebrew, entitled, "The Fountain of Life" (Mekor Chayim, Fons Vitæ). A Christian Emperor destroyed the temple of philosophy in Athens, and exiled its last priests. Since that time philosophy had been outlawed in Europe; at least, it was little known there, and had been compelled to find a home in Asia. The Jewish thinker, Ibn Gebirol, first transplanted it again to Europe, and built an altar to it in Spain, where it found a permanent dwelling.

Being like Plato, of a poetical nature, Ibn Gebirol borrowed the dialogue form of composition from this highly-spiritual Greek philosopher. His system is revealed in a lively conversation between a master and his pupil. He thereby overcomes the dryness, which is the usual feature of metaphysical studies, and makes them enjoyable. He paid so little attention to Judaism in his system, that unless one was aware that he was a Jew, true and thoroughly devoted to his faith, it could never be discovered from his writings. The philosophy of Ibn Gebirol therefore found little favour in Jewish circles and exercised very little influence. The Jewish thinkers found its contents foreign to them, since it breathed no national sentiments; and the form

of demonstration was too involved, the explanations were given too fitfully, and being devoid of consecutive order, were altogether too unsatisfying. At first the system of Ibn Gebirol aroused more attention among the Arabian and Christian scholars. A century after its appearance, his chief work was translated into Latin by the combined labour of a Christian priest and a baptised Jew. Several of the chief Christian scholastic writers were acquainted with the mode of thought taught by Ibn Gebirol, whom they called Avicebrol or Avicebron. Others opposed him, but all manifested an interest in him. In later times the Kabbala borrowed many principles from him.

Another Jewish philosopher of this time, which was so rich in great men, pursued a different course from Ibn Gebirol, and whilst introducing new elements, took his stand by the fundamental principles of Judaism. Bachya (Bechaya ben Joseph Ibn Pakuda [Bakuda]) revealed in his personality a pattern of deeply earnest religiousness, and cheerful, resigned morality, and established an entirely original moral theology of Judaism. Bachya was one of those natures whose energy of spirit and powerful moral force would, if favoured by the circumstances of the time, have effected a Reformation. Of the details of the life of this moral philosopher absolutely nothing is known, not even the part of Spain in which he lived. He is only known to us in his work, "Instruction in the Duties of the Heart," which he wrote in Arabic, and in which nothing appears of so much importance as complete submission to the inner religious life sanctified by the Divine hand. Biblical exegesis, grammar, poetry, speculative philosophy, all things in which the scholars of the age busied themselves are, according to Bachya, subordinate branches hardly worth the trouble of serious attention. The study of the Talmud even has no very high merit in his eyes. Bachya Ibn Pakuda.

strove to reach the very core of Judaism; the inner duties which conscience demands are of infinitely higher value to him than the ritual duties, which only serve to give strength to the laws of religion. He divided Judaism, as did the Christian teachers of the first century, under two heads:—(1) The purely religious and moral; (2) Ceremonial religion; and attached greater importance to the first than to the second.

The complete dedication to a godly and an unselfishly pure life, which is the *summum bonum* of Bachya, remained no abstract theory with him, but was exemplified in his whole being, and raised his scrupulousness even to the point of inflicting bodily pain on himself. The pursuit after the inner life of religion led Bachya to an excessive result, to rigid asceticism, which appeared to him to be the highest degree of perfection in this life to which man could attain. Judaism, according to his view, inculcates frugality and abstemiousness. The patriarchs, from Enoch to Jacob, received no laws setting limits to their pleasure, as they were unnecessary, their souls being able to overcome the lusts of the flesh. But their descendants, the Jewish nation, were commanded to be abstemious, because they had become corrupt by their intercourse with the Egyptians, and had degenerated, owing to their desire for luxury, when they had obtained an accession of wealth at the time of the capture of the land of Canaan. For this reason the law of the Nazirite was instituted. The more degenerate the Jewish nation became the more certain individuals, and especially the prophets, felt themselves impelled to withdraw from communion with society and worldly affairs, and to retire into seclusion and lead a contemplative life. This example men ought to follow. It is indeed impossible that all men should relinquish the world and its activity, because an utter desolation would ensue which was never intended by God. There

must be, however, a class of exemplary persons who shall deny themselves intercourse with the world (Perushim), and who shall serve as patterns to mankind to show how the passions can be curbed and controlled. Bachya was very near extolling monasticism, to which the Middle Ages, both in the Mahometan and Christian worlds, had such a marked inclination. Although intimate with philosophy, like his younger contemporary, the Mahometan philosopher Algazali, he would have dedicated his life as a Jewish hermit to retirement from the world in a monastery, and to a contemplative life of meditation, or have imitated the "Mourning for Zion" of the Karaites, were it not that in Rabbinical Judaism the basis for such extravagant excess was wanting.

The first Rabbinical epoch was so fertile in original minds that it also produced a personality which threatened to shake violently the firm basis of Judaism. This was a man whose profound knowledge of philosophy and medicine was also celebrated among the Arabs. He possessed the long name of Abu Ibrahim Isaac Ibn Kastar (or Saktar) ben Yasus, to which was added the cognomen of Yizchaki. Born at Toledo (982, died 1057), he was appointed physician to the Prince of Denia, Mujahid, and his son Ali Ikbal Abdaula. Ben Yasus composed a Hebrew Grammar, under the name of "Compositions," and another work with the title of "Sefer Yizchaki," in which he displayed a remarkable acuteness in the comprehension of the Bible. He asserted especially that that portion of the Pentateuch in Genesis which treats of the kings of Edom was not written by Moses, but was interpolated some centuries later, a critical statement that stands entirely alone in the Middle Ages, and which was first employed in comparatively modern times.

It would be wrong to pass over in silence a poet, who, for flights of fancy, depth of thought, and beauty of expression, may claim equality with

Solomon Ibn Gebirol, but of whom the only fact known is that he left one single poem, "an orphan poem," as he himself called it. Abu Amr Joseph ben Chasdaï was probably born in Cordova. His two brothers, who were driven by the troubles of the wars in Spain, to wander away from home, were under the protection of the statesman, Samuel Ibn Nagrela. Out of respect and thankfulness to this noble patron, Joseph ben Chasdaï wrote that profoundly reflective and artistically-fanciful poem, in which he eulogised Samuel and his young son, Joseph, with enthusiastic warmth (about 1044-46). Samuel, who would never accept anything, not even a gift of praise, wrote in praise of Joseph ben Chasdaï, a similar poem in the same metre, but which did not possess the same poetical beauty. Joseph ben Chasdaï left a son, who later obtained a similar position in Saragossa to that of Ibn Nagrela in Granada. Samuel, the pride of the Spanish Jews, who, as his biographer says, bore four crowns, the crown of learning, of the priesthood, of renown, and pre-eminently that of magnanimity, was the soul of the Jewish congregation for over a quarter of a century, and died deeply lamented by his contemporaries (1055). He was buried before the gate of Elvira, in Granada, and his son erected a magnificent monument to him. A yet finer monument was built for him by Solomon Ibn Gebirol in a few pithy verses:—

"Thy home is now within my heart,
Whence ne'er shall thy firm tent depart.
There I seek thee, there I find thee,
Near as my soul art thou to me."

Samuel's noble son, Abu Hussain Joseph Ibn Nagrela (born 1031) was a worthy successor to all the honours and titles of his father. The king, Badis, appointed him his vizir, and the Jewish community in Granada acknowledged him, although but twenty-four years of age, as their Rabbi and chief

(Nagid). His father had placed him under learned tutors from different countries, and already in his youth he displayed an extraordinary maturity of mind. Joseph, who, like his father, was well acquainted with Arabic literature, became during his father's lifetime secretary to the heir apparent Balkin. When eighteen years old his father had chosen for him a wife, whom he did not seek among the wealthy and noble families of Andalusia, but who was the learned and virtuous daughter of the poor Nissim of Kairuan. Joseph was heir to all the greatness of his father, and though rich and surpassingly handsome, he lived in the prime of his youth, with a moderation that presented a marked contrast to the debauchery of the Mahometan nobles. In his capacity as minister Joseph worked for the welfare of the State, and ruled as independently as his father. Science and its followers he supported, and so great was his liberality and so lofty his nobility of soul, that even Arab poets sang his praises. "Greet his countenance," said a Mahometan of him, "for in it wilt thou find happiness and hope. Never has a friend found a flaw in him." When the sons of the last Gaon, descended from the Prince of the Captivity, fled to Spain, Joseph Ibn Nagrela received them hospitably, and assisted them in finding a new home in Granada. The young Jewish Vizir, like his father, was the head of a College, and delivered expositions on the Talmud.

In two things only did Joseph fail to imitate his father's conduct; he promoted his co-religionists too conspicuously to positions of state, and behaved haughtily to his subordinates. A near kinsman of his house he installed in the office next beneath his own. By these acts Joseph aroused the hatred of the Moors, the ruling population in Granada, both against himself and the Jews. They envied his truly princely splendour. He had a palace which was paved with marble. Some occurrences

during his vizirate transformed the hatred into fierce anger. Between the heir apparent, Balkin, and his former secretary, Joseph, there was a mutual antipathy. Suddenly Balkin died, it was thought by poisoning. The King Badis thereupon had some of the servants and wives of the prince executed as guilty of his death. The remainder fled for fear of a similar punishment (1064). It was popularly believed, however, that Joseph had administered the poison to the prince. Another incident, in which Joseph revealed himself at once as humane, and as a diplomatist devoted to his master, appears to have lost him the favour of Badis. Between the Moors who held the sovereign power in Granada and other places in Spain and the original Arabs there raged such a fierce racial hatred that every town of mixed population became divided into two camps. On one occasion King Badis learnt that the Moorish ruler in Ronda had been slain through a conspiracy of the Arabs organised by the King of Seville, and on this account he became filled with mistrust towards the Arabs of his capital. He feared every moment that he was about to fall a victim to a conspiracy of his own kinsmen. He thereupon concocted a fiendish plot; he ordered his army to massacre all the Arabs of his capital together during divine service on a Friday. This plan he communicated to his Jewish minister, without whose advice he did nothing, adding that his determination was so firmly made that no objections would possibly be of any avail to cause him to desist from his object. He expected Joseph to maintain the deepest silence about his project. Joseph, however, considered this murderous plan as a dangerous political error, and omitted nothing whereby he might persuade the blood-thirsty monarch to abandon his design. He impressed upon the king that the plot might miscarry, and the Arabs of the town and

of the suburbs might rush to arms for their self-preservation ; and that, even in the event of the whole Arab population being destroyed without resistance, the danger would not disappear, but rather become magnified ; for the neighbouring states, which, like Seville, were wholly Arab, would be excited to a deadlier fury, and enter upon a war of revenge against the murderers of their kinsmen. “I see them already,” said Joseph with energy ; “already do I behold them hurrying towards us burning with rage, each one brandishing his sword over thy head, O king. Foes, countless as the waves of the sea, hurl themselves against thee, before whom thou and thine army will be powerless.” Thus spake the Jewish statesman.

Badis, nevertheless, persisted in his resolve, and issued his commands to the generals of his army. Joseph alone deemed it his duty to abstain from taking part in the mischievous design of the king against his Arab subjects, and determined to frustrate the plot even at the risk of his own life. Through the medium of certain women, on whom he could rely, he sent secret instructions to the chief Arabs of the capital, warning them not to attend at the Mosque on the following Friday, but to keep themselves concealed. They understood the hint and obeyed it. On the Friday the troops were drawn up in readiness near the palace. The spies of Badis found in the Mosque only one Moor and a few Arabs of the lower classes. Badis was thus obliged perforce to abandon his plan ; but his anger turned chiefly against his minister, whom he suspected of betraying his trust, and reproached bitterly for it. Joseph denied the charge of warning the Arabs, and asserted that his plan had revealed itself by reason of the mysterious military preparations, which had produced so little effect. Finally, he remarked, that the king should thank God that He had protected him from impending

dangers. “The time will come when thou wilt approve of my views of the matter, and wilt readily follow the advice I give thee.” A Moorish Sheik also came to the support of the vizir, and Badis became appeased. A dislike still lingered in his heart against his Jewish minister, and he was full of suspicion of him. Joseph could only uphold his position by the aid of spies who conveyed to him news of every utterance of the king. The Moors, however, noticed that the Jewish vizir was now no longer in high favour with their sovereign, and were emboldened to enter into plots against him, and to openly display their hatred against him and the Jews. Damaging rumours were being continuously circulated about him. His enemies were victorious. A fanatical Mahometan poet, Abu Ishak al-Elviri, in a fiery poem, stimulated the fierce enmity of the Mahometans of Granada against the Jews into energetic action. A passage in it ran as follows:—“Say unto the Sinhachites, to the mighty men of the time, and the lions of the desert, ‘Your lord has committed a disgraceful deed, he has given honour to the infidels. He appointed as minister (Katib) a Jew, when he was well able to find one among the faithful. The Jews buoy themselves up with foolish hopes, make themselves high as chiefs, and treat the Moslems with haughtiness. When I entered Granada I perceived that the Jews possessed the sole authority, and divided the capital and the provinces among themselves. One of this accursed tribe is at the head of the state and issues his orders.’” This inflammatory poem was soon in the mouth of all Mahometans; it was the croaking of the raven for Joseph’s death.

At length a certain incident so aroused the fury of his opponents that his life was sacrificed to it. The troops of a neighbouring prince, Almotassem of Almeria, had made an inroad on the territory of Granada, and they declared that Joseph had come

to some agreement with their king, whose army was to be requisitioned in carrying out his intention of surrendering the country to Almotassem. The truth of the matter can never be discovered. As soon as the statements of the Almerian soldiery had spread abroad, the Moors, accompanied by a crowd of the common rabble, hastened on the same day, on a Saturday, to the palace of Joseph. On receiving news of the rising he concealed himself, and disguised himself, as he thought, beyond recognition. His furious enemies, nevertheless, recognised him, slew him, and crucified him before the gates of Granada. The youthful minister met his sad end in the thirty-fifth year of his life (9 Tebet, 30 December, 1066). The rage of the infuriated assassins also spent itself on many Jews in Granada who had not saved themselves by flight. Over one thousand five hundred Jewish families were massacred on that day, and their houses destroyed. Only a few escaped the slaughter, among whom were Joseph's wife, with her young son, Azaria, who fled to Lucena. So little of their enormous wealth had they been able to save that they were compelled to rely for their support on the congregation of Lucena. The valuable library of Joseph was partly destroyed and partly sold. Great was the mourning for the Jewish martyrs of Granada and for the noble Jewish prince. Even an Arabian poet, Ibn Alfara, who had sung of Joseph during his lifetime, dedicated an elegy to him, in which these words occur:—"Mine is the true religion, and this bids me to shed a tear for the Jew." On account of this sympathetic grief calumnies were spread against the Mahometan poet at the Court of the king of Almeria, who was admonished against extending the hand of friendship to him. The prince, however, replied, "This poet must bear a noble heart, that he laments a Jew after his death, for I know Moslems who did not concern themselves as much even about their living co-religionists."

The attack against Joseph Ibn Nagrela in Granada was the first persecution of the Jews in the Pyrenean Peninsula since its conquest by Islam. It appears to have lasted some time, for the Jews were driven to wandering about the whole kingdom of Granada, and were compelled to sell their unportable possessions. It had no effect, meanwhile, upon the Jewish inhabitants of other parts of Spain. The princes or kings of each district, who had made themselves independent on the downfall of the Caliphate of Cordova, were so hostile and jealous towards each other, that the people who were persecuted by one prince were protected by his enemy. The three distinguished Jews who had been banished from Granada were received in a friendly spirit by Almuthadid, king of Seville. To Joseph Ibn Migash I. he gave a high post. The king of Saragossa, Al-muktadir Billah, a patron of science and poetry, had also a Jewish vizir, Abu Fadhl, a son of the poet Joseph Ibn Chasdaï, who contended with Ibn Gebirol for the laurels of poetry. This Abu Fadhl Chasdaï (born about 1040) was likewise a poet, but, although acquainted with Hebrew, he only wrote in Arabic verse. The following opinion of him was expressed by an Arab critic :—"As soon as Abu Fadhl wrote poetry one was ready to believe in witchcraft; he did not range in order verses, but miracles." Abu Fadhl was also distinguished in other branches of science; he understood the theory and practice of music. His favourite study appears, however, to have been speculative philosophy. The remarkable qualities of his mind attracted the attention of the King of Saragossa, who made him his vizir (1066).

Not long after, the noble philosophical poet Solomon Ibn Gebirol also ended his days on earth. His gloomy spirit appears to have become still more sombre through the tragic events in Granada. His last poems were therefore elegiac laments

over the hard lot which Israel endured there. "Wherefore does the slave rule over the son of the prince? My exile has already lasted a thousand years, and I am like the howling bird of the desert. Where is the high priest who will discover to me the end of it all?" (1068). In the last year of his life, in a similar strain, Solomon Ibn Gebirol complained—"Our years pass on in distress and misery; we look for the light, but darkness and humiliation greet us: slaves rule over us. Till she fell Babylon held sway over me; Rome then reduced me to sore straits; Javan and Persia scattered me far and wide; and now Ishmael, for already 461 years (from the time of the Hejira), despoils me" (1069). This was truly the swan-song of Ibn Gebirol. He spent the last year of his life, after many wanderings, in Valencia, and there he died, when not yet fifty years old (1069 or 1070). A legend relates that an Arab fellow-poet slew him out of envy of his masterly powers of song, and buried his body beneath a fig-tree. In consequence of this deed the tree produced extraordinary blossoms, and the attention of passers-by was drawn to it, till at last the murder of the noble poet was discovered.

At the time when Spain showed such an abundance of distinguished men, France and Germany were lacking in important creative minds; and the history of the Jews of these countries presents hardly any interesting features. They lived entirely undisturbed, were landowners, cultivated the vine, occupied themselves in handicrafts and trade, and only had to pay to the prince, in whose territory they dwelt, a kind of Jew-tax.

However much the French and German Jews may have lacked energy and chivalry, they occupied neither a lower nor a higher grade than their Christian compatriots. Their chief occupation on both sides of the Rhine consisted in the study of the

Talmud, in which Gershom had initiated them. "They even try to scare away sleep the better to absorb themselves in the Talmud."

The first Jewish persecution on Andalusian soil undertaken by the Mahometan fanatics of Granada, at first alarmed all the communities of Spain, but was powerless to discourage them permanently, or to effect stagnation in their efforts. The pursuits of science and poetry had become so much a second nature to the Jews of Southern Spain, that only frequent and crushing disasters could repress this tendency. The persecution remained altogether isolated, and was not followed up. The people of Granada had murdered the Jewish vizir and several of his nation, which, however, did not hinder other kings or emirs from attracting gifted Jews to their Courts, entrusting them with important affairs, and thereby giving the Jews altogether up to a certain point the same position as that occupied by the ruling population of the State.

An Arabian historian complained that the Princes of the Faithful abandoned themselves to sensual enjoyments, and placed their power in the hands of the Jews, and made them (Hayibs) vizirs and private secretaries. The example of the Mahometan Courts went so far as to exercise an influence on the Christian States. They also began to employ Jews, clever in business, in the affairs of the State, and their ability and faithfulness added greatly to the growth of its power. Thus the position of the Spanish Jews remained at first completely untouched all through the progress of the Christian warfare, and the gradual dissolution of the Mahometan principalities. They felt just as much at home under the dominion of the Cross in Spain, as under that of the Crescent, and were able, unfettered, to satisfy their love of investigation. Their emulation in the domain of science and of poetry, far from cooling, increased, if possible, more and more, and the number of those

whose minds it filled, increased from year to year. Yet it appears that in the period after Ibn Nagrela and Ibn Gebirol, poetry, linguistic attainments, exegesis, and philosophy, although eagerly followed, were superseded by the study of the Talmud, which was more zealously pursued than these other branches, and became, as it were, a centre of study. The dialectics of the Talmud became developed and simultaneously adopted in Spain, Africa, and France. The study of the Talmud received an impetus through which the achievements of the Geonim were gradually thrown quite in the shade. Six men, of whom five bear the name of Isaac, and the other was called Yizchaki, may be regarded as the principal figures of the second Rabbinical age. Isaac Ibn Albalia, distinguished also through his political position; Isaac Ibn Giat and Isaac ben Reuben, who were at the same time Talmudists and writers of liturgical poems; Isaac Ibn Sakni, Isaac Alfassi, and Solomon Yizchaki, of whom the latter two were creators of an independent method going far beyond the Gaonic method of teaching.

Isaac ben Baruch traced his authenticated origin to Baruch, a noble exile of Jerusalem, who is supposed to have been sent by Titus to a proconsul at Merida, in order to manage for him the silk trade which was indigenous to his family in Spain. Later the Albalias had migrated to Cordova, and became one of the most distinguished families of the Andalusian capital. The youthful Isaac (born 1035, died 1094) early betrayed a gifted mind and a burning thirst for knowledge. His inclinations were divided between astronomy, mathematics, philosophy, and the Talmud. Samuel Ibn Nagrela encouraged him in his studies by gifts and writings, and his son Joseph, being possessed of great wealth, provided him with an independent position. Isaac Ibn Albalia lived alternately in Cordova, and with his noble patron in Granada. He only trifled with

poetry, and turned his mind to deeper studies. Isaac Ibn Albalia had scarcely attained his thirtieth year, when he produced a commentary to elucidate the most difficult portions of the Talmud. He worked at the same time at an astronomical work, concerning the principles of the Jewish calendar, under the title *Ibbur*, which he dedicated to his patron, Joseph Ibn Nagrela, in 1065. Isaac Ibn Albalia escaped from the massacre in Granada's bloody days (1066), as he was at the time sheltered by his friend Joseph, and he afterwards made Cordova his permanent abode. Here he became acquainted with the noble Prince Abulkassim Mahomet, who learned to prize his high attainments in science and poetry. When the latter ascended the throne of Seville, under the name of Al-Mutamed (May, 1069), he summoned to his Court at Seville, Ibn-Albalia, and made him his astronomer, though he had not so much to observe the motions of the stars as to foretell futurity through the position of the constellations. He also appointed Isaac Albalia as chief over different communities of his kingdom, which fortunate conquests had made the mightiest in Mahometan Spain. The conquered districts extended northwards as far as Cordova, and eastwards to Murcia. Isaac, therefore, like Ibn Chasdai, Ibn Jau, and Ibn Nagrela, took the rank of Prince (*Nassi*). He was at the same time Rabbi over the communities of the realm of Seville, and was moreover acknowledged abroad as such. As his master, Al Mutamed was the most illustrious prince in Spain, so Isaac was the most illustrious and learned man among the Spanish Jews. Beautiful Seville became through him the centre of Jewish Spain, as Cordova and Granada had been in the past. Al Mutamed, the last noble ruler of the Arab race in Spain, had also another Jewish functionary at his Court, Ibn Misha'l, whom he employed on

diplomatic missions, and who was known by his contemporaries as Isaac ben Jehuda Ibn Giat (b. 1030, d. 1089), though few facts of his life are known. He belonged to a rich and illustrious family, whose residence was Lucena (not far from Cordova). Both the Ibn Nagrelas gave him in his youth many proofs of their respect, and he was devoted to them heart and soul. After the tragic end of Joseph Ibn Nagrela, Ibn Giat gave himself much trouble to raise Joseph's son Abunassar Azaria to the rank of Rabbi of Lucena. But death deprived this noble house of her last scion. The community selected Isaac Ibn Giat to be their spiritual chief on account of his learning and virtues. Liturgical poetry, philosophy, and the Talmud, were the three domains that he sedulously cultivated.

Isaac Albergeloni, in his old age, compiled an independent systematic work treating of civil rights of the Talmud. He also was inspired in a serious form by the muses. He composed new "Azharot" in powerful but awkward language, and adorned his verses with Biblical quotations aptly chosen. Isaac Albergeloni is the originator of the Hebraic Azharot, which consist in interweaving verses from the Bible, and giving them a witty imaginative application.

When Albergeloni came to Denia, the fourth Isaac (ben Moses) Ibn Sakni was departing from thence, probably on account of his having been slighted. He wended his way eastward, and in Pumbaditha became a teacher of the Law under the name of Gaon. So great was the change in the times! Whilst the Occident formerly lent a willing ear to the utterances of the Geonim in the Orient, it was now, scarcely half a century after the death of Gaon Hai, able to send teachers to the country where stood the cradle of the Talmud, and a man who found no recognition in

Spain was still an authority for the once proud Pumbaditha.

All these four Isaacs were outstripped by the fifth, Isaac ben Jacob Alfassi, or Alkalai, in his knowledge of the Talmud, and his acute conception of it. Born in Kala-Ibn-Hammad, in the neighbourhood of Fez (1013), he heard the last African authorities, Nissim and Chananel, and after their death in 1056 he became the bearer of the Talmud in West Africa. Indifferent to the scientific subjects cultivated by the gifted Jews of Spain and Africa, who were urged on by some inward force, and also probably by considerations of their own worldly interests, Alfassi devoted all his powers of penetration towards a deeper insight into the Talmud. He was imbued with a deeply earnest independent nature, which could not keep to the beaten track of time-honoured customs, but struck out new paths. As in the Talmud conflicting opinions frequently occur on one and the same subject, it had hitherto been the custom to follow practically the lead of the Geonim, and to accept their explanations and decisions as normal. Alfassi, on the contrary, proceeded from the commentaries to the text itself, and sought with his usual acuteness to distinguish all that was incontestable and durable, and of real import, in the Talmud, from that which was doubtful, superficial, and expedient. The opinions of the Gaonic authorities were no criterion for him. In this spirit he compiled a work, which, in spite of the attacks levelled at it at the time, became a standard book for the entire Jewish community. His "Halachot" insist only on the practical part of the Talmud, but at the same time elevate it beyond all doubt to a position of certainty. Alfassi's work consigned to oblivion all similar works of a former period which had been compiled in the course of three centuries, since Jehuda Gaon's time. His name, on account of this work, resounded far beyond

the Straits into Spain, where he numbered still more admirers than in his native land.

A complete match for Alfassi, however, in his knowledge of the Talmud, was the Frenchman, Solomon Yizchaki, a man as acute and independent as himself, only less bold and consistent, but more universal in his attainments.

Solomon Yizchaki, known under the name of Rashi, was born, 1040 (died 1105), at Troyes, in Champagne, in the same year as the last Gaon suffered martyrdom, just as if to intimate that the new impetus given by Rashi would fully compensate for the downfall of the old institution. Rashi's mother was the sister of Simon ben Isaac, who was highly respected on account of his services to the community of Mayence and his liturgic poetry, and his father was also well versed in the Talmud. Thus Rashi had, as it were, drawn his nourishment from the Talmud, and in it he lived and had his being. In order to perfect himself in the study of the Talmud he frequented the Talmudical school of Mayence, but also attended the lectures of the Talmud teachers in Worms, and of Eliakim in Speyer. Like Akiba he left his home and his wife to devote himself to the study of the Law in foreign parts. He relates of himself in what needy circumstances he pursued this study, in want of bread, denuded of clothes and fettered by matrimony. Now and then, probably on the festivals, he visited his wife, but he always returned again to the German, or as they were then called Lotharingian, intellectual centres. At the age of 25 (1064) he settled permanently at Troyes. In his modesty he was unaware that already at that time he was venerated as a master of Talmudic lore.

In Rashi's first answers, in which, when still a youth, he stated his opinions, there is no trace of the groping novice, but rather of the skilful adept

mastering his materials. Consequently his teachers lavished on him the most flattering eulogies in their letters. Isaac Halevi, of Worms, wrote to Rashi, "Thanks to you this age is not orphaned, and may many like unto you arise in Israel."

Undoubtedly the community of Troyes and its vicinity selected him for their Rabbi, but he certainly drew no emoluments from this office. In a time when a dispassionate author could write of the prelates of the Church of the period of Pope Hildebrand, "No one could become bishop or abbot of the empire unless he was either rich or given to vice; amongst the priests, he was praised most highly who had the most splendid garments, the most sumptuous table, and the handsomest concubines;" at that time, and also for a long time after, it was considered in Jewish circles as a sin and disgrace for the Rabbis to accept remuneration for the performance of their duties. The Rabbinical order was looked upon in Christian territories, and in those of Islam, as an honorary post, only to be given to the most worthy; and the Rabbi was to be a shining light to the community, not only with respect to attainments, but also as to moral character. Sobriety, frugality, indifference to Mammon, were as a matter of course expected of every Rabbi. Rashi was the most perfect embodiment of this conception of a Rabbi's character, and Jewish posterity beheld in him a spotless personification of their ideal. His contemporaries also revered him as the highest authority. From all parts of France and Germany demands were addressed to him requiring his decision, and his answers testified as much to his profound knowledge as to his sweetness of temper. After the death of the Talmudical scholars in Lotharingia, about 1070, the German and French disciples flocked to Rashi's lecture-room at Troyes; he was looked upon as their proper successor. He

lectured on the Bible and Talmud. Rashi was so imbued with the spirit of this study, that there remained nothing unfathomable to him in it. In its elucidation he surpassed all his predecessors, so that it was rightly said that without him the Babylonian Talmud would have been neglected like that of Jerusalem. His explanations which he wrote under the name of "Commentary" (*contoros*), about a large part of the Talmudic tractates, are a pattern for critics, simple, concise and yet lucid. Writing, as he did, in the intelligible idiom of the Talmud, he did not put a word too little or too much. The explanations of words and things are intended for the beginner as well as for the thorough-going specialist. Rashi understood the art of giving clearness to the text by placing himself in the position of the reader; and by a skilfully placed expression he knew how to prevent misunderstanding, to meet objections and discourage questions. Rashi, as commentator, might be called an artist. He thus soon supplanted the commentaries of Gershom and his masters. Rashi also wrote a commentary on most of the books of Holy Writ, and in this he showed no less independence. His tact and his strict adherence to truth led him to seize the true meaning of words and the proper relation of sentences. But he allowed himself frequently to be guided by the Agadic opinions, on the supposition that the elucidation of verses occurring in the Talmud and the Agada was meant seriously. Yet he was conscious, though not perhaps clearly so, that the simple text (*peshat*) was contradictory to the Agadic mode of explanation (*the derasha*). In his old age this consciousness increased, and he expressed to his learned grandson (Rashbam) the wish that he would revise his commentaries of the Bible in the spirit of a sober and literal explanation of the text. Rashi at that time towered above the contemporaneous Christian expositors of the Bible,

who throughout believed seriously that Holy Writ contained a fourfold meaning. Rashi's skill in exposition appears the more surprising as he was unacquainted with the important achievements of the Spanish school. He only knew the first part of the Hebrew grammar by Menachem ben Saruk and Dunash, whom he took for his guides. Chayuj's and Ibn Janach's works, however, being written in Arabic, remained unknown to him. Therefore his grammatical nomenclature is clumsy and frequently obscure. Nevertheless no commentary of Holy Writ has been as popular as Rashi's, so that at one time many considered him as the counterpart of the text, and every one of his words was commented upon and criticised in a lengthy manner. His mantle fell upon his grandsons and sons-in-law, who were his greatest disciples. For he had no sons, but only three daughters, of whom the one was so deeply versed in the Talmud that during her father's illness she read to him all the questions concerning the Talmud that had been sent to him, and wrote down the answers dictated to her. All three daughters were married to men of learning, and gave birth to sons worthy of their descent. One of these sons-in-law, Meir, of Rameru, not far from Troyes, became the father of three distinguished sons. Through Rashi and his school the north of France, Champagne, became the home of Talmudic lore as Babylonia had been of old. It laid down the law for the rest of Europe. The French Talmudical students were in request even in Spain, and were liberally remunerated for their instruction. The leadership, which Jewish Spain had taken over from Babylonia, had to be shared with France from Rashi's time. Whilst Spain remained the classic ground with respect to Hebrew poetry, linguistic attainments, exegesis and philosophy, it had to yield the palm to France with regard to the study of the Talmud.

At this time there were two men in Spain who occupied themselves exclusively with grammar and the study of the Bible, and although they did not particularly enrich these branches, yet they undoubtedly imbued them with fresh vitality. They were Moses ben Samuel Ibn Jikatilla, from Cordova, and Jehuda Ibn Balam, from Toledo (about 1070 till 1100). The former, the disciple of Ibn Janach, in his exposition of Holy Writ followed entirely the free tendency of his master. Some of the Psalms were attributed by Ibn Jikatilla to a later period, whilst the opinion prevailed amongst Jews as well as Christians that the whole psalter was the work of the royal bard. He did not highly esteem the division of verses according to the "Massora," and made two verses run into one, contrary to the directions of that system.

The representatives of the Spanish Jews distinguished themselves in science and poetry. In France a great impetus was given to the study of the Talmud. The Jews, however, of the Italian peninsula occupy a very low pedestal in the history of culture. Their poetic effusions, whether liturgical or secular in character, lack the true charm of poetry, and their diction is harsh and barbaric—and their Talmud lore was obtained from foreign parts rather than from home. Nathan ben Yechiel, of Rome, is the only Italian of that time whose name figured in Jewish literature. He compiled a Talmudic lexicon, under the title of "Aruch," about 1001—1002; it was more complete than the earlier achievements, but was put together with small capacity from older works, and principally from the writings of Chananel, from Kairuan. This lexicon became the key to the Talmud. Kalonymos, from Rome, is also mentioned as a Talmudic authority. Rashi spoke of him with great respect; the community of Worms elected him as their Rabbi after the year 1096.

However, he has left nothing in writing, and seems to have exerted no influence. The historical works of this period are silent respecting the political position of the Italian Jews, a proof that it was not an unfavourable one.

Events of world-wide importance in Western Europe, the extensive invasions of Christians in Mahometan Spain, and the first crusade against the Mahometans in the East brought about important changes for the Jews of Western Europe, which for the greater part took a tragic turn, and interrupted their peaceful occupation with the Law. In the fortunes of Spain the Jews played no insignificant part, although their active interference is not conspicuously visible. They to a certain extent helped to lay the powder mine which should destroy their great grandsons. The first powerful blow dealt by the demolition of the Islamitic dominion in the Peninsula south of the Pyrenees emanated from the Castilian King Alfonso VI., who was as brave as he was clever in State affairs, and who placed more reliance on the power of the sword and diplomatic art, than he did on that of the cross and of prayer. The aim which his activity assigned to him, to invade the Mahometan kingdoms and principalities, was only attainable if he could encourage the rulers in their dissensions and rivalry one against the other, and in this manner weaken them altogether. To that end he required clever diplomatists, and among his subjects the Jews were the most suitable for the office. His knights were too clumsy, and his citizens too ignorant to be fitted for missions of a delicate nature. At the Mahometan Courts of Toledo, Seville, Granada, there reigned a refined, cultured, intellectual tone, and frequent allusions were made in conversation to the brilliant history and literature of the Arabs. If an ambassador at these Courts wanted to accomplish anything, he was

obliged to be acquainted, not only with the Arabic language in all its ramifications, but also to be familiar with the manners relating to the Court. For this the Jews were particularly useful. Therefore Alfonso employed Jews for diplomatic missions at the Courts of the Mahometan princes. Such a Jewish diplomatist at the Court of King Alfonso was Amram ben Isaac Ibn Shalbib, originally Alfonso's private physician. As Ibn Shalbib was well versed in Arabic and had an insight into the political circumstances of that period, the King of Castile appointed him private secretary, and entrusted him with important affairs. Alfonso had also another Jewish adviser of the name of Cidellus, who was on such intimate terms with the king, that, notwithstanding his reserved and inaccessible nature, he would speak to him more freely than any of the Spanish noblemen and grandees of the empire would have dared to do. Alfonso, who was far from being imbued with religious bigotry, and who had acquired liberal views from his contact with the Mahometan princes, not only conferred distinctions on certain Jews, but also cleared the way to dignities and honours for all the sons of Jacob dwelling in his dominions. It is true that Alfonso had found a certain equality of citizenship existing in many parts of Christian Spain. According to the West Gothic Code the Jews were to be treated as reprobates, to be subjected to particular regulations and were not to be allowed to act as witnesses. On the other hand, according to the rights of custom (*fueros*), Christians, Jews, and Mahometans of the same town and the same country had one and the same right. The Jew had to make an oath against the Christian on the "Torah." If Jews and Christians had a lawsuit together, they had to select a Christian and a Jewish umpire (*Alkalde*) as arbitrators. Did any one wish to sell his house, two Christians and the same number of Jews had to make out a valuation

of the same. According to another customary right (*fuero de Najera*) the Jews were treated neither better nor worse than the nobles and the clergy; one and the same sum was fixed as the price of blood for a murder perpetrated either on a Jew, a nobleman, or a priest. Down to the smallest details of daily life the equality between the Jews and Christians before the law was made manifest. As Alfonso now confirmed these municipal laws, the civil equality of the Jews was legally acknowledged, and the ignominy of the West Gothic legislation against the Jews was herewith effaced. Jews were even under certain circumstances admissible to the honour of duelling, and to military service. The Mediæval ages seemed to emerge into light, and the Roman-Christian narrow-mindedness emanating from Theodosius II., that the Jews were to participate in no honour, seemed about to vanish.

However, the Church, whose foundation was intolerance, was not likely to countenance in a Christian land the promotion of Jews to honourable posts. Their principal representative at that time, Pope Hildebrand, who, under the name of Gregory VII., through his legates and the shafts of his proscriptions, plunged Europe into a state of ferment and disunion, protested against this state of things. He, the mightiest of the mighty, before whom kings and nations grovelled in the dust, wished also to humble the defenceless Jews, and to rob them of the respect and honours which they had acquired through their merit.

The Emperor Henry IV. had also given favourable privileges to the Jews of Worms, as well as to the other citizens of this town. When princes and priests, towns and villages, unmindful of their oath, and excited by the Pope, broke their faith, and treated him as one under an interdict, the town of Worms remained faithful to him. A year

after, when Pope Gregory treated the Emperor as a boy, making him do penance in his shirt, he was also eager to humble the Jews. At the Church congress in Rome, in 1078, when he issued for the second time his interdict against the enemies of Popery, he promulgated a canonical law to the effect that the Jews were to hold no post in Christendom, and to own no supremacy whatever over the Christians. This canonical decision was principally directed against Spain, where, owing to the peculiar position caused by the continued strife with the Arabs, a certain independence of the Romish Church had asserted itself. As Gregory wished to force upon King Alfonso foreign bishops who would be pliant tools for the fulfilment of his will, he endeavoured to arrest the influence of the Jews at the Court of Castile. He therefore directed a vigorous epistle to Alfonso in 1080, in which the following words occurred:—

“As we feel impelled to congratulate you on the progress of your fame, so must we at the same time deprecate the harm you do. We admonish your Highness that you must cease to suffer the Jews to rule over the Christians, and to exercise authority over them. For to allow the Christians to be subordinate to the Jews, and to subject them to their judgment is the same as oppressing God’s Church and exalting Satan’s synagogue. To wish to please Christ’s enemies means to treat Christ himself with contumely.”

On the other hand, the Pope was far more satisfied with William the Conqueror, King of England and Duke of Normandy, who ratified the decision of the Congress in Rouen that the Jews were not only prohibited from keeping Christian bondsmen, but also from having Christian nurses.

But Alfonso had to give his attention to other interests besides the intolerance of the Church. He troubled himself but little about the decision of the great Congress in Rome, and the autograph of the Pope, and retained his Jewish advisers. He was just then revolving in his mind the plan of invading the kingdom of Toledo. In order to accomplish

this he had to isolate its governor from the neighbouring princes of his faith and race, and to be assured of their neutrality or even their co-operation in case of an invasion. For that, however, he required his Jewish diplomatists, and could not entertain the idea of satisfying the importunities of the Pope. Through an alliance with the noble and valiant King of Seville, Al Mutamed Ibn Abbad, Alfonso conquered the old and important town of Toledo (1085), which was the first bulwark of the Spanish Mahometans against the aggressive power of the Christians. The victor of Toledo assured to the Jews of this town and the territory appertaining to it, all the liberties which they had enjoyed under the Mahometan rulers. The last unfortunate Mahometan king of Toledo, Yacha Alkader, who had to set out to Valencia, had a Jewish confidant in his vicinity, who remained faithful to him long after his death, whilst his nearest friends betrayed him.

Alfonso did not rest satisfied with the possession of Toledo, which was again elevated to the rank of capital, but wished to utilise the disagreements and petty jealousies of the Mahometan princes for the purpose of making fresh conquests. First of all he had determined to attack the territory of the king of Seville, who had also acquired Cordova. He therefore suddenly dropped the mask of friendship, and preferred to Al Mutamed claims such as he could take for granted this noble prince would not in due honour concede. With the perilous mission of enlightening the king of Seville, and of standing face to face with him in a firm and defiant attitude, Alfonso entrusted his Jewish Councillor of State, Isaac Ibn Shalbib, who was charged to pay no regard to courtesy. Five hundred Christian knights accompanied Alfonso's Jewish messenger to the Court of Seville, in order to give weight to the embassy. This commission cost Ibn Shalbib his

life. He maintained, in the spirit of his master, so firm a tone, and insisted so unflinchingly on the proposed claim, that Al Mutamed fell into a violent passion, transgressed the ambassadorial rights, killed Ibn Shalbib, nailed him to a gibbet, and had his followers imprisoned.

The breach which in consequence occurred between Alfonso and the king of Seville induced the latter to join the Council of the rest of the Mahometan princes, and send for the victor in North Africa, the Almoravide Prince Yussuf Ibn Teshufin, to aid him against Alfonso. Al Mutamed gave the idea for this ill-fated plan. The African hero appeared in answer to the invitation, and brought with him the servitude and downfall of the Andalusian prince.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FIRST CRUSADE.

The position of the Jews in Germany previous to the Crusades—The Community of Speyer and Henry IV.—The Martyrs of Treves and Speyer—Emmerich of Leiningen and the Martyrs of Mayence—Cruel persecutions at Cologne—Sufferings of the Jews in Bohemia—Pitiful death of the Jews of Jerusalem—The Emperor Henry's justice towards the Jews—Return to Judaism of Converts—Death of Alfassi and Rashi.

1096—1105 C.E.

TOWARDS the end of the eleventh century there arose the first contest between Christianity and Islam—on other ground than that of Spain. This contest turned the history of the world in a new direction, and caused the history of the Jews to be inscribed on pages dripping with blood. Peter of Amiens' lamentations as to the ill-treatment of pilgrims in Jerusalem, which found a thousandfold echo at the Church congress in Clermont, had roused alike piety, romantic chivalry, ambition, and a number of noble and ignoble desires to take part in a Crusade. A terrible time ensued; but the greatest amount of suffering fell on the German Jews, who, far and wide, had to seal their confession of faith in blood. Before the Crusades the Jews of Germany dwelt in peace; they were neither excluded from the possession of land, nor were they despised and humiliated. When Bishop Rüdiger Huozmann, of Speyer, included old Speyer within the limits of the town, he knew no better way of

giving respectability to the town than by allowing the Jews to have privileges and dwellings therein. Bishop Rüdiger gave a special jurisdiction to the Jews, and their chief or rabbin (Archisynagogus) had equal rights with the burgo-masters to decide law-suits. The Jews could buy their own slaves, and hire male and female servants from the Christians in opposition to the Canonical laws and against the will of Pope Gregory VII. In order to protect them from the intrusion of the mob, Rüdiger gave them a special quarter, which they might fortify and defend. These privileges, for which they paid annually $3\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of gold, were to be guaranteed to them for all time. Rüdiger adds in the document that he had granted to the Jews the same favourable conditions which they enjoyed in other German towns. The Emperor Henry IV. confirmed these privileges, and added other favourable conditions. This emperor, who, in spite of his thoughtlessness and fickleness, was never unjust, issued a decree (6th February, 1095), which was remarkably beneficent for the Jews. No one was permitted, under fear of punishment, to compel either the Jews or their slaves to be baptised. In a law-suit between Jews and Christians the Jewish law and oaths were to be followed. They could not be compelled to undergo ordeals by fire and water; and yet not long after this they were cut down by the holy combatants in the Sacred War. The German and North Frankish Jews were just then full of hope of the coming of the Messiah. A mystic had reckoned out that the son of David would appear towards the end of the 250th cycle of the moon, between the years 1096-1104, and would lead back the sons of Judah to the Holy Land. But instead of the trumpet-blast of the Messianic redemption they heard only the wild cries of the Crusaders: "The Jews have crucified our Saviour, therefore they must return to him or die."

The first troops of Crusaders, the one led by the pious Peter of Amiens and his eight knights, the other by Gottschalk, did no special harm to the Jews; they plundered Christians and Jews alike. But the hordes who followed—the scum of the French, English, and Flemish—began the holy work of plundering and murdering the Jews for want of Mahometans. It was a shameless mob of men and women, who indulged in every sort of excess. But these blasphemous Crusaders were sanctified warriors; their sins, past or future, had been absolved. A monk threw out the hint that the Jews should be brought to Christianity by force. An inscription, found on the grave of Jesus, had made this a duty to all believers. This idea seemed to the wild Crusaders both profitable, easy to fulfil, and pleasing to God. The Jews were equally infidel with the Saracens, and both were deadly enemies of Christianity. The Crusade could begin on the spot, and a commencement be made with the Jews; and when the troops assembled in France and Germany they were recognisable both by the cross on their garments and by the blood of the Jews. The massacres in France, however, remained isolated, although the first assemblage of Crusaders occurred there. In Germany there was peace at that time, and the Jews of the Rhine district had no suspicion of the sad fate which was about to befall them. Notwithstanding this they assembled, at the command of the head of their congregation, to pray for their imperilled brethren in France. But these escaped with a fright only, the princes and priests taking the part of the Jews energetically. Only in Rouen, which belonged to England, did the Crusaders drive the Jews into a church, and, placing a dagger at their breasts, give them a choice between death and baptism. The persecutions first received a tragic character on German ground.

The hordes which spread through France and Flanders to German territory had as a leader a French knight, William the Carpenter, who at the commencement had plundered his peasants of money for fitting out his soldiers. The spirit pervading William's troops was shown by one trait. They had a goose and herd of goats to precede them, firmly believing that these would show them the way to Jerusalem. To such enemies were the Jewish communities of the Moselle and the Rhine given over. The Emperor Henry was at that time occupied in war with Italy, and the wildest anarchy prevailed in Germany. At the first news of the approach of William, the congregation of Treves was seized with such terror that some of its members killed their own children. Women and girls loaded themselves with stones and threw themselves into the Moselle in order to escape baptism, or disgrace at the hands of the holy hangman. The rest of the community entreated the Bishop, Egilbert, for his protection. But this hard-hearted prince of the Church, who perhaps sought to rid himself of an imputation of heresy by his eagerness for proselytism, replied: "If you apostatise I will give you peace and the enjoyment of your property. If you remain unmoved your soul and body shall be destroyed together." The Jews thereupon assembled in council and determined on the advice of Micah, the chief of the congregation, to accept Christianity—but in appearance only. He said to the Bishop: "Tell us quickly what to believe, so that we may be freed from the men who watch at the gate ready to kill us." The priest recited the Catholic confession of faith which the Jews repeated, and then were baptised. It was a disgraceful victory which Christianity celebrated over the congregation of Treves, but it did not last long. Thereupon the troops went to Speyer, where the congregation had lately had documentary promises

of liberty and peace. Here the Jews were dragged to the Church and commanded to undergo baptism. This they resolutely refused, and were murdered (8th Iyar—3rd May, 1096). The remaining Jews fled to the palace of the Bishop Johannsen, or to the Emperor's palace. The Bishop, who was more humane and pious than Egilbert, and would not countenance such forcible baptism, opposed the furious mob. The Jews defended themselves, and there were no more sacrifices amongst them. Johannsen caused some of the Crusaders to be executed, which act was strongly reprehended by the monkish chroniclers. They asserted that he was bribed by the Jews. It is not to be wondered at if the Jews shuddered at baptism, and held themselves to be disgraced if they were borne off unconscious to the font. Christianity, as it was in the eleventh century, they could only regard as a terrible sort of Paganism. The worship of relics and pictures; the conduct of the Head of the Church, who absolved nations from a sacred oath and incited them to regicide; the immoral, dissipated life of the priesthood; the horrible practices of the Crusaders—all these things reminded them much more of the practices of idolaters than of the followers of a spiritual God. As in the days of the Maccabees their predecessors had revolted against the enforced worship of Zeus, and the attendant observances, so did the German Jews feel towards the Christianity of the times.

The mob which had undertaken an attack on the congregation of Speyer does not appear to have been very powerful, and could therefore be repulsed. It now awaited reinforcements, and fourteen days later a large body of Crusaders—"wolves of the forest"—with ever increasing numbers, entered Worms. The Bishop Allebrandus could not, or would not, give the Jews sufficient protection. It does not seem, however, that he approved of

the massacre of the Jews, but he sheltered a part of the community, probably the richest and most respected, in the palace. The others, left to themselves, at first attempted to resist, but, overcome by numbers, they fell under the blows of their murderers, crying, "The Lord our God is one." Only a few submitted to baptism, but the greater number preferred suicide. Women killed their tender babes. The fanatics destroyed the houses of the Jews, plundered their goods, and burnt the Scriptures found in the synagogues and houses (on Sunday, 23rd Iyar—18th May). After eight days those who had found protection in the Bishop's palace were also attacked. Perhaps the fanatics made a raid on the palace, and demanded the surrender of their victims, or perhaps Allebrandus himself had only offered to the Jews an asylum, in order to convert them through kindness. At any rate, the bishop informed the Jews that he would no longer shelter them, unless they consented to be baptised. The chief amongst them begged for a short interval for consideration. The fanatics remained outside the palace, ready to lead the Jews to the font or to death. After the appointed time the Bishop caused the door to be opened, and found the Jews bathed in blood; they had preferred to die at the hands of their brethren. At this the furious mob fell on the survivors, whom they murdered; the corpses they dragged into the street. Only very few saved themselves by appearing to accept Christianity (Sunday, 1st Sivan—25th May). A youth, Simcha Cohen, whose father and seven brothers had been murdered, desired to avenge himself. He was taken to the Church, and at the moment when he was to receive the sacrament he drew forth a knife and stabbed the nephew of the Bishop. As he expected, he was murdered in the church. It was only when the Crusaders had left the town that the Jewish martyrs were buried

by Jewish hands. The gravedigger buried nearly 800 corpses. The congregation, which was formed later on, kept a memorial of the martyrs, or Holy ones (Kedoshim), and regarded them as patterns of faith.

The day after the massacre of the remnant in Worms the Crusaders arrived in Mayence. Here their leader was a Count Emmerich, or Emicho, of Leiningen, a near relation of Archbishop Ruthard, an unprincipled blood-thirsty man. He desired the riches of the Jews of Mayence as much as their blood, and seems to have conceived the horrible plan which he carried out, together with the Archbishop, an opponent of Henry IV. The Archbishop invited all the Jews to take shelter in his palace, until the storm should have passed. Over 1,300 Jews took refuge in the cellars of the building, with anxious hearts and with prayers on their lips. But at break of day (Tuesday, Sivan 3rd—27th May), Emmerich of Leiningen led the Crusaders to the bishop's palace, and demanded the surrender of the Jews. The Archbishop had certainly set a guard, but they refused to bear arms against the fanatical pilgrims, who easily penetrated into the palace, and the terrible spectacle of Worms was repeated. Men young and old, women and children, fell by the sword of their brethren or before the enemy. The corpses of thirteen hundred martyrs were eventually conveyed from the palace. The treasures of the Jews were divided between the Archbishop and Emmerich. Sixty Jews Ruthard kept hidden in the church, and they were taken or conveyed to the Rhine district. But they were seized and murdered also. Only a few were baptised; two men and two girls—Uriah and Isaac, with his two daughters—were induced by fear to accept baptism, and truly their repentance drove them to a heroic but terrible deed. Isaac killed his two daughters on the eve of Pentecost, in his own house, and then set fire to

the dwelling; then he and his friend Uriah went to the synagogue, set fire to it, and died in the flames. A great part of Mayence was destroyed by this fire.

Meanwhile, Crusaders, under William the Carpenter, assembled at Cologne on the eve of Pentecost. The members of the oldest congregation of Germany prepared themselves for the worst; but they entreated the protection of the citizens and bishop. Touched with pity for their Jewish fellow-citizens, the humane burghers of Cologne received the Jews into their houses. When the furious mob, at break of day on Pentecost (Friday, May 30th), entered the houses of the Jews, they found them empty, and had to spend their fury on stones and wood, which they destroyed, pillaging the contents and destroying the Rolls of the Law on the very day when the Law had been given. An earthquake which occurred on the day incited the madmen to fresh fury; they considered it as a sign of heaven's approval. One man and his wife fell as victims. The pious man, Bar-Isaac, willingly accepted a martyr's death. He did not desire to escape; he remained in his house, engaged in prayer, and was dragged to the church, where he spat on the crucifix, and was killed. The remaining Jews of Cologne remained unhurt in the houses of the citizens and in the bishop's palace. The noble bishop, Hermann III., whose name deserves to be immortalised, permitted the Jews of Cologne to depart, and placed them in safety in seven towns and villages appertaining to him.

The Jews prayed and fasted day by day, and on the days when they heard that the pilgrims had come to Neus for the feast of St. John, 1st Tamuz (24th June), they fasted two days successively. The pilgrims had prepared themselves by a mass on the day of St. John for fresh murders; and, according to one authority (which, however, is not strictly

trustworthy), they killed all the Jews who had taken refuge in Neus, two hundred in number. A man, named Samuel ben Asher, had probably exhorted his brethren to remain firm, and the murderers vented their rage on him and his two sons even after their death.

The pilgrims at last discovered the clue to the refuge of the Jews of Cologne, and sought them out in their hiding-places. Many had ended their lives in the lakes and bogs. A learned man, named Samuel ben Yechiel, set an example to the others. He killed his young son on the water, pronouncing a blessing; and when his victim said "Amen," the lookers-on pronounced the words, "Hear, O Israel!" and threw themselves into the water.

The pilgrims, however, sought out the Jews, and in two months (May—July) twelve thousand Jews were killed in the Rhenish towns. The rest apparently accepted Christianity, but only in the expectation that the just Emperor, on his return from Italy, would listen to their complaints. Wherever the savage pilgrims met with Jews the tragic scenes were repeated. The large community of the town of Ratisbon suffered greatly. Through the events of the Crusades the Jews of Bohemia enter into history; until then they had not felt the pressure of the yoke, Christianity not having as yet attained to power in Slavonic countries. Many amongst them were wealthy, and occupied themselves in the slave-trade, chiefly amongst those Slavs (Slavonians) who were exported to the west of Europe and to Spain. But by these means the Jews came in conflict with the priesthood, and Bishop Adalbert of Prague strove against this practice, and collected large sums of money in order to buy the slaves from the Jews. Then the Crusades commenced, and the poisonous seed of fanaticism was carried thither. When the Crusaders traversed Bohemia, its powerful duke, Wratislaw II.

was occupied in a foreign war, and could do nothing to stem the evil. The Crusading miscreants were, therefore, at liberty to gratify their fanaticism, and drag off the Jews of Prague to baptism, or to kill those who resisted. Bishop Cosmo preached in vain against such excesses; the Crusaders understood Christianity better than the chiefs of the Church.

Fortunately for the Jews of Western Europe, and especially of Germany, it was only the mere scum of the people who were filled with this blood-thirsty fanaticism. The princes and citizens were disgusted at such deeds of crime, and the higher priesthood, with the exception of Archbishops Ruthard of Mayence and Egilbert of Treves, were on the side of the Jews. The time had not yet arrived when the three powers—the nobility, priesthood, and people—were at one in hatred and persecution of the Jews. When the news came that 200,000 Crusaders, under Emmerich and Hermann, had met with a disgraceful end—most of them having been killed in Hungary, whilst a miserable remnant only had returned to Germany—both Jews and Christians alike felt it to be a judgment of God. Meanwhile the Emperor Henry IV. had returned from Italy, and at the news of the atrocities perpetrated against the Jews by the Crusaders, he had publicly announced his horror, and owing to the intervention of the chief man of the congregation of Speyer, Moses or Gutthiel, he had permitted those who had been forcibly baptised to return to Judaism. This was a gleam of joy for the Jews of Germany. The converts did not fail to make use of their liberty to throw off the mask of Christianity (1097). The representatives of the Church, however, were by no means pleased at this proceeding. Even Pope Clement III., who was upheld by the Emperor, declaimed against his humanity, which

was contrary to the teachings of the Church. "We have heard," he wrote to Henry IV., "that the baptised Jews have been permitted to fall away from the Church. This is unexampled and sinful; and we demand of all our brethren that they take care that the sacrament of the Church be not desecrated by the Jews." But the Emperor troubled little about the unholy zeal of the priesthood. Far from forbidding the Jews to return to their religion, he even permitted proceedings to be instituted against the relations of Archbishop Ruthard of Mayence, on account of the theft of the property belonging to the Jewish congregations. The Jews of Mayence in a petition informed the Emperor that Emmerich of Leiningen and his relations, together with the archbishop, had appropriated the treasures deposited by the Jews in the archbishop's palace. None of the accused appeared in answer to this citation, to defend themselves. Ruthard, whose conscience was not clear, feared the shameful discoveries that might ensue, and as he was in disfavour with the emperor, he fled to Erfurth. Thereupon the emperor confiscated the revenues of the archbishopric (1098). Ruthard revenged himself by joining the enemies of the emperor, who plotted to annihilate him.

The Jews of Bohemia were very unfortunate in this year. Hearing that the emperor had permitted a return to Judaism, they abandoned their assumption of Christianity, but feared to remain in a country where they could not obtain justice. They gathered together their property and possessions in order to send them on to a place of safety, and determined to emigrate to Poland or to Pannonia (Austria or Hungary). Wratislaw, the ruler of Bohemia, now returned, and heard that the Jews intended sending their riches out of the country. Thereupon he put soldiers into their houses. The elders were called together, and a treasurer of the

duke's announced to them in his lord's name that everything they possessed belonged to the duke, and that they were endeavouring to rob him. "Ye brought none of Jerusalem's treasures to Bohemia. Conquered by Vespasian, and sold for a mere nothing, ye have been scattered over the globe. Naked ye have entered the land, and naked ye can depart. For your secession from the Church Bishop Cosmo may judge you." There was nothing to be said against this logic, for it was the argument of brutality, and thus the Bohemian Jews were plundered, and only so much was left to them to stay the immediate cravings of hunger. With a certain amount of joy a contemporary chronicler of that time relates that the Jews were despoiled of more gold than had been the case with the inhabitants of Troy when conquered by the Greeks. The Jews of Jerusalem were in yet a worse plight. When the Crusading army, under Godfrey of Bouillon, after many troubles, had taken the city by storm, and perpetrated a massacre of the Mahometans, they drove the Jews, Rabbanites and Karaites altogether, into a synagogue, set fire to it, and cruelly burnt all within its walls (July 15, 1099).

The Emperor Henry, however, seriously desired to protect the Jews of his empire. Having heard of the horrible scenes of murder in Mayence which had occurred during his absence, he caused his princes and citizens to swear an oath that they would keep the peace with the Jews, and that they would not illtreat them (1103). The protection thus granted by the emperor to the Jews was of benefit to them for the time being, but brought evil results in its wake. They assumed, thereby, a dependent position towards the ruler of the land, almost that of slaves.

This circumstance was not the only evil result to the German Jews of the first Crusade. On the

one side Pope Clement III. claimed the converts who had joined the Church to save themselves from death, forgetting that their whole being turned against the Church, and that they regarded their enforced Christianity with contempt and hate. On the other hand, those who had remained Jews kept apart from the renegades, would not intermarry nor mix with them, nor eat nor drink with them, although the latter had shown their attachment to Judaism by a prompt return to it. These unhappy people were thus regarded as renegades from both sides. When, however, Rashi heard of this narrow view, his true piety became clear. "Far be it from us," he said, "to separate and shame those who have returned. All that they did was done from fear of the sword, and they lost no time in returning to Judaism."

Other results of the first Crusade were yet worse. The minds of the German Jews, who were already inclined to extravagant piety, became yet more bigoted through their unexampled sufferings. Every merriment was avoided amongst them, and they went clothed only in sackcloth and ashes. Though they hated the Catholic Church, they adopted from it the usage of visiting the graves of their martyrs, whom they called (*Kedoshim*), and offered up prayers to the dead, and entreated their intercession with Heaven. The Judaism of Germany from that time assumed a gloomy aspect. Their poets, if they are to be called so, only sang variations on the fearful troubles and the desolation of Israel in their penitential prayers and lamentations. The study of the Talmud formed a favourable contrast to the increasing tendency towards a penitential attitude on the part of the German Jews. This study, as organized by Rashi, was a protection against thoughtless, brooding monasticism. He who desired to find his way in the intricate mazes of the Talmud had to keep his eyes open to mundane facts, and

could not permit his intellect to grow rusty. The absorption in the Talmud became the balm for the wounds caused by the crusading mob amongst the communities of the Rhine district. In the school the pleasures of thought obtained, and no sorrow or despair was to be found. The two men who gave an impulse to Talmudical studies died at the commencement of the twelfth century. They were Isaac Alfassi (1103), and Rashi, who died two years later (1105, 29th Tamuz—13th July). Both left a large number of disciples, who spread the study of the Talmud, and both were highly honoured by their contemporaries and by posterity. The admiration of the Spaniards for Alfassi was expressed (owing to their high culture) in verses, whilst the German and North Frankish Jews, who were at a lower stage of culture, commemorated him in exaggerated legends. Two young poets, Moses Ibn Ezra and Jehuda Halevi, composed touching elegies on the death of Alfassi.

CHAPTER X.

ZENITH OF THE SPANISH-JEWISH CULTURE : JEHUDA HALEVI.

The Jews under the Almoravides — Joseph Ibn Sahal, Baruch Ibn Albalia, Joseph Ibn Zadik—Joseph Ibn-Migash—The Poets Ibn Tabben, Ibn Sakbel and Ibn Ezra—Abulhassan Jehuda Halevi—His Poems and Philosophy—The Chozari—Incidents of his Life—Prince Samuel Almansur—Jehudah Halevi's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem—His Death.

1105—1148 C.E.

THE Jews of Spain, even those of Andalusia, could still consider this cultivated soil as their native country. Even under the barbaric Almoravides, who had become masters of the south, they could live in security and peace, for these people were no fanatics. Only on one occasion did a prince of the Almoravides, named Yussuf Ibn Teshufin, attempt to compel the Jews of his district to accept Islam when he was travelling through Lucena and saw the populous Jewish community, who through Alfassi had become dominant in the cultured world of Spain. This prince called together the representatives of the Jews, and announced to them that he had read in a book that Mahomet had bestowed religious liberty on the Jews under the condition that their expected Messiah should arrive within 500 years. Should this space of time after the Hejira have passed without his appearance, the Jews must without opposition accept Mahometanism. The Jews of Mahomet's age accepted the condition, and the time having now elapsed, he (Yussuf Ibn Teshufin), the leader of the Faithful,

expected them to fulfil the condition, or he would withdraw his protection from them, and declare them to be outlaws. The Jews of Lucena, however, by gifts of money and the intercession of his wise vizir, Abdallah Ibn Allah, induced Yussuf to alter his intention.

Under the second ruler of the Almoravide dynasty, Ali (1106—1143), the Jews not only lived in peace, but some of them were entrusted with the receipts of the poll-tax on the Jewish and Christian inhabitants, and other distinguished men received posts of honour at the court. Science and poetry were the cause of admission to high dignities. A Jewish doctor and poet, Abu Ayub (Solomon Ibn Almuallem), of Seville, was physician to the Caliph Ali, and bore the title of prince and vizir. Alcharizi asserts that his verses would have rendered eloquent the lips of a dumb man, and would have made the eyes of the blind to see. A doctor named Abulhassan Abraham ben Meïr Ibn Kamnial, of Saragossa, likewise occupied a high post at Ali's court and also bore the title of vizir. The greatest poets of the time eulogized him in verse on account of his noble sentiments, his generosity and commiseration for the future of his co-religionists, "A prince who treads the earth but whose aim is towards the stars. He hurries like the lightning to practise kindness, whilst others only creep along. The doors of his gifts are open to those at home and to strangers. Through his fortune he saves those doomed to death and rescues the lives of those who are doomed to destruction. The prince (Ibn Kamnial) is a protection and a guard for his people; he dwells in Spain, but reaches as far as Babylon and Egypt." Abu Ishak Ibn Mohajar also bore the title of vizir and was immortalized by the poets. The prince Solomon Ibn Farusal was likewise praised by his contemporaries. He was probably in the service of a

Christian prince, and was entrusted with an embassy to the court of Murcia. Shortly before the battle of Ucles, when the Mahometan forces obtained a signal victory over those of the Christians, Ibn Farusal was murdered (1108, 20th Iyar—2nd May). The youthful Jehuda Halevi, who had composed a song of praise for the reception of the vizir, had to change it into an elegy on the mournful news of the vizir's murder.

An astronomical writer, Abraham ben Chiya Albargeloni (b. 1065, d. 1136), also occupied a high position under another Mahometan prince. He was a sort of minister of police (Zachib as-Shorta), and bore the title of prince. He was held in high consideration by the ruler on account of his astronomical knowledge, and had disputes with learned priests, to whom he demonstrated the accuracy of the Jewish calendar. He also praised the parasitic science of astrology, and drew a horoscope of favourable and unfavourable days. Abraham Albargeloni reckoned that the Messiah would appear in the year after the Creation 5118 (1358).

Although men of influence and knowledge were not wanting at this period in Spain, yet none of them had the centralising power of Chasdai Ibn Shaprut and Samuel Ibn Nagrela, who developed slumbering powers and pointed out the road of literary activity. The first half of the twelfth century produced a vast number of clever men in Jewish circles (poets, philosophers, Talmudists), and their labours bore the stamp of all but perfection. The life of culture of this period resembled a fruit garden, rich in odorous blossoms and luscious fruits, whose productions, varied as they are in colour and taste, have their root in the same earth. The petty jealousy displayed by Menachem ben Saruk and Ibn Gebirol, the inimical feelings existing between Ibn Janach and Samuel Ibn Nagrela, between Alfassi and Ibn Albalia, were not found in this circle. The poets

sang each other and praised the men who turned their attention to science. They took the greatest interest in their mutual successes, and consoled one another in misfortune, and regarded each other as members of one family. The union which in these days existed between the supporters of Jewish knowledge and poetry bears witness to their nobility of mind. It is difficult in a history of these times to record and describe all the important personages. There were seven Rabbis of this period, mostly disciples of Alfassi, who, besides the study of the Talmud, displayed great aptitude for poetry and cultivated science.

In Cordova, Joseph ben Jacob Ibn Sahal (born 1070, died 1124), a disciple of Ibn Giat, was the Rabbi. He appears to have met with trouble in the commencement of life, and complains of want of recognition in his verses. To Moses Ibn Ezra, who was his friend, he wrote a letter in verse full of complaints. Ibn Ezra, however, who also required sympathy, consoled him in a poem of similar rhythm to that of Ibn Sahal. The verses are easy, flowing and smooth, though without much depth.

Yet more celebrated than these was the Rabbi of Cordova, Abu-Amr Joseph ben Zadik Ibn Zadik (born in 1080, died 1148-49), the successor of Ibn Sahal in the Rabbinate. Although Ibn Zadik was celebrated as deeply read in the Talmud, his works consist of philosophical treatises in the Arabic language. His philosophical religious work (*Mikrokosmos*) Ibn Zadik dedicated to a disciple who had asked him what was the nature of the greatest good for which man can strive. The thoughts developed by Ibn Zadik are by no means new, but were used in the Arabic philosophy of the times and adapted by him to Judaism. Knowledge of self leads to knowledge of God, to a pure understanding of God, and to the recognition that the world was created by the Divine

Will from nothing. This Will is contained in the Revelation, the Torah. This Will, God revealed to man, not on His own account, for He is rich, all-sufficing and without wants, but because it would contribute to the happiness of man in the world beyond. The first duty of man, of the Jew, the servant of God, is to cultivate his mind and acquire wisdom and understanding, so that he may honour God in a worthy and spiritual manner and win the pleasures of future happiness. Ibn Zadik also remarks that the rites of Judaism, such as the observance of the Sabbath, should be consonant with sense and Divine wisdom. Man having free will, it is natural that God should decide on the reward and punishment of his actions. Thus the reward of the soul can only consist herein, that it should become united to its source the universal soul, and the only conceivable punishment is that the sinful soul does not attain to this destination. The soul of the sinner stained with earthly failings cannot wing its flight to heaven, but may flutter without rest about the world as a punishment. Ibn Zadik's philosophical work, on account of its mediocrity, was but little noticed by his contemporaries and successors. His fame as a poet was not important; and although his liturgical and other verses are light and pleasing, they are not the outpouring of a poetic soul, but are to some extent a concession to fashion.

Joseph ben Meïr Ibn Migash Halevi (born 1077, died 1141) surpassed his contemporaries in the deeper studies of the Talmud. Grandson of an important man at the court of Abbadides in Seville, and son of a learned father, he became in his twelfth year a disciple of the school of Alfassi, whose lectures he attended uninterruptedly for fourteen years. When Ibn Migash married (in 1100), Jehuda Halevi composed an enthusiastic epithalamium, in which he praised the

youthful couple. Before his death Alfassi chose him as his successor, and showed his noble character in the selection. Although he left behind him a learned son, he nominated as his successor a clever disciple, but the wisdom of choosing a young man of six and twenty seems to have been challenged by some of his disciples (Sivan, May, 1103). Joseph Ibn Migash deserved the praise lavished on him by the poet on account of his intellectual and moral qualities. His descent from an ancient and noble race, his high position as chief of the most respected community, did not deprive him of modesty nor the dignity of his important office of humility. Mild, however, as was his character, he yet employed the utmost severity when the well-being of Judaism was in question.

Spain was at this time in a very excited state, and was split up into parties. In Andalusia the native Arabs opposed the victorious Almoravide Berbers, and attacked each other in secret or open war. The colonising Christians (the Mozarabi), in the neighbourhood of Granada, conspired secretly against their Mahometan tax-masters, and calling on the conqueror of Saragossa (Alfonso of Aragon), promised to hand over Granada to him. Christian Spain was no less divided, though Castile and Aragon ought to have been united through the marriage of Alfonso of Aragon and Urraca, Queen of Castile. This unhappy marriage was the cause of anarchy. One party held with the king, the other with the queen, and the third with the young Infante Alfonso VII., whose teacher had incited him against his mother and stepfather. Christians and Mahometans were frequently seen fighting under one standard, sometimes against a Christian prince, sometimes against a Mahometan Emir. The making and breaking of treaties followed each other in quick succession. Deception and treachery

occurred continually, and even the clergy of high position changed parties and fought their former allies or assisted their former enemies.

The Jews of Spain did not remain unmoved in these scenes of anarchy, and either willingly or perforce joined the one or other party according as their interests or political opinions were involved. When Mahometans or Christians formed plots they could in case of discovery take refuge with their powerful co-religionists. The Jews, however, did not enjoy this protection, and could only hold together for safety. Treachery amongst themselves was, therefore, most disastrous for them, as the anger of the enraged rulers not only struck the conspirators or the congregation, but the entire Jewish population of the country. When, therefore, the congregation of Lucena on one occasion handed over a traitor to his co-religionists, the Rabbi and Judge, Joseph Ibn Migash, determined to make an example of him. They had the traitor stoned to death on the evening of the Day of Atonement.

Joseph Ibn Migash left a learned son, Meïr (1144), and a large circle of disciples, amongst whom was Maimun of Cordova, whose son was destined to open up a new era in Jewish history. In proportion as the study of the Talmud in Spain received an impetus, Biblical exposition and the study of Hebrew grammar declined. These branches were not pursued further.

This period was, on the other hand, rich in poets. The Hebrew language during two centuries, from the time of Ben-Labrat, had become smooth and pliable, so that it was no difficult matter to make verses, and employ rhythm and metre. The involved forms used especially by Solomon Ibn Gebirol found not a few imitators. The custom of the Arabs of sending friendly letters in the form of verses, which was adopted by the Spanish Jews, made the

art of poetry a necessity : he who did not desire to appear illiterate had to learn to versify. The number of poems which at this period saw the light of day was legion. Amongst poets worthy of record, and who also occupied themselves with other matters, were Judah Ibn Giat, Judah Ibn Abbas, Solomon Ibn Yektiel, and the brothers Ibn Ezra. They were all surpassed by the prince of poets, Jehuda Halevi, who was recognised by his contemporaries as a master of song, whilst the muse of most of the poets of the time was a serious one.

Solomon ben Sakbel, a relative of Rabbi Joseph Ibn Sahal, used the Hebrew language for lighter verses. The new form of poetry introduced by the Arabian poet, Hariri of Basra, induced Ibn Sakbel to make a similar attempt in the Hebrew language ; he wrote a kind of satirical romance, called *Tachkemoni*, the hero of which—Asher ben Jehuda—is exposed to deceptions and vicissitudes. The hero relates his own adventures in rhymed prose, interspersed with verses in which he relates how, together with his love, he had passed a long time in the forest depths, until, tired of the monotony, he joined a circle of friends who passed their time in banqueting. Attracted by the letter of some unknown fair one, whom he sought long, he was introduced into a harem, of which the master, with grim “Berber face,” threatened him with death. This, however, was only a mask assumed by the maid of his lady-love, in order to frighten him. At length he thought to attain his end, but when he meets the lady, he finds her to be only a masked friend, who desired to mock him. This poem has no artistic merit, and is only an imitation of the Arabian pattern. The ease with which Ibn Sakbel employs the Hebrew language, and passes from the deepest earnestness to the lightest jesting is the only thing to be admired.

The four brothers Ibn Ezra of Granada were

richly endowed; they were noble, learned, and wealthy. Their names were Abu-Ibrahim Isaac, Abu-Harun Moses, Abulhassan Jehuda, and Abuhajaj Joseph, the youngest. Their father Jacob had occupied a post under King Habus, or rather under his vizir, Ibn Nagrela. One might know, said a contemporary historian, that these four princely sons of Ibn Ezra were of David's blood, of noble lineage, from their nobility of character. The chief amongst them was Abu Harun Moses (born 1070, died 1139), who boasted that he was the pupil of his eldest brother. He was the most prolific poet of his time.

A misfortune seems to have aroused his muse. He loved his niece, by whom he was loved in return. The brother, however, refused to give him his daughter, and the other brothers approved the decision. Moses fled from his father's house and emigrated to Portugal and Castile (1100). He was tortured by pangs of love, and time even did not heal his wounds. False friends seem to have widened the breach between him and his brothers. His love found expression in verses, and the muse became his comforter. He sought to drown his sorrows in earnest studies, and to find in knowledge both brothers and beloved. He indeed won friends and admirers who remained true to him until death. A man of high position in Christian Spain, who was represented as a benefactor of the Jews, took an interest in the unhappy Moses, on whom he bestowed his friendship. Moses Ibn Ezra closely resembled Solomon Ibn Gebirol. He also complained of deception and jealousy, and the hardships and faithlessness of the times. Like the poet of Malaga, it is his own emotions that inspire him; there is no great aim in his poetic effusions. But Moses Ibn Ezra was not so tender or so impressionable as Ibn Gebirol, nor was he as sad or complaining, but at times sang lively songs. He was far behind Ibn Gebirol

as a poet. His poetry was laboured and overdrawn, his verses hard and without sweetness and freshness, and neither rhythmical nor harmonious. Moses Ibn Ezra was especially fond of using words of the same sound, but of different and often opposite meanings, which habit he adopted from the Arabian poets. One must admit his command of the Hebrew language, the abundance of his poetical works, and the variety of metres with which he enriched Hebrew poetry. He composed verses which he called a row of pearls, composed of 1,210 verses in ten divisions; they were dedicated to his patron Ibn Kamnial. These verses are as varied in form as in contents. The poet in this collection also sings the praise of wine, love, and joy, a sensual existence, and the song of birds; he also complains of the separation of friends, faithlessness, the approach of old age; he recommends trust in God; and lastly, he praises the art of poetry. Besides this wreath Moses Ibn Ezra composed three hundred poems for special occasions in more than ten thousand verses, and also two hundred prayers for New Year and the Day of Atonement, portions of which are still used in many synagogues (of the communities of Spain, Montpellier, Avignon, and the Romagnoles). These poems are devoid of true poetic fervour; they are all composed according to the rules of art, but true beauty is wanting. Moses Ibn Ezra wrote, in the Arabic language, a dissertation on the rules of poetic art, called "Conversations and Recollections," which is also a sort of history of Spanish Jewish poetry from its commencement. This work, dealing also with Arabic and Castilian poetry, is a treasure for the literary history of Spain. The weakest work of Moses Ibn Ezra is his so-called philosophical treatise in the Hebrew language, in which he explains the barren philosophy of the times according to Arabian patterns.

Notwithstanding his comparative insignificance as a philosopher, and his mediocrity as a poet, Moses Ibn Ezra was held in high honour by his contemporaries on account of his facility in writing. He stood on a friendly footing with all important personages of the time, and they praised him in prose and verses, and he likewise praised them. He became reconciled to his brothers, when the love of his youth died in giving birth to a boy (1114). On her deathbed she spoke of him, and her words, which became a holy remembrance to him, caused him to compose an elegy which, imbued as it is with true feeling, was far more poetical than his other works. This elegy Moses Ibn Ezra sent to his eldest brother, and it was the first step to their reconciliation. As his brothers departed this earth one by one, the survivor was overwhelmed with grief, and dedicated to their memory verses which were full of feeling. Moses Ibn Ezra retained his poetic gift until a great age. Jehuda Halevi wrote a touching tribute to his memory.

The great star and most important writer of this period was Abulhassan Jehuda ben Samuel Halevi (Ibn Allevi), from Old Castile, born in 1086. His name deserves to be inscribed in a book with a border of gold. To describe him worthily, history would need to borrow from poetry her most glowing colours and sweetest tones. Jehuda Halevi was a chosen one, to whom the expression "an image of God" might be applied without exaggeration. He was a perfect poet, a perfect thinker, a worthy son of Judaism, which, by his poetry and his ideas, he ennobled and idealised.

If ever Spain could be brought to lay aside its prejudices, and to desist from estimating its great men of history by the standard of the Church, Jehuda Halevi would occupy a place of honour in its Pantheon. The Jewish nation has long since crowned him with the laurels of poetry, and recog-

nised the wealth of inner piety and pure morality that he possessed.

“ Pure and true, without blemish,
Were both his song and his soul.
When the Creator had formed this soul,
Pleased with Himself at His work,
He kissed the beautiful creation.
And the glorious echo of his holy kiss
Trembles yet in every song of the poet,
Sanctified through this divine grace.”

His deep moral earnestness was closely allied to the serenity of his life. The admiration which was showered upon him did not destroy his modesty, and however much he yielded to his friends, he still preserved his own peculiar characteristics, and the independence of his views. His rich store of knowledge concentrated itself on one point, and however great a poet, in the purest sense of the word, he may have been, he had also a living consciousness of his own feelings, thoughts, and actions. He prescribed a rule for himself and remained true to it. Deep as were his sentiments, he was far from anything like excess.

The outward history of Jehuda Halevi contains little that is extraordinary. Born in Christian Spain, he attended the College of Alfassi at Lucena, because Castile and the north of Spain were still, especially at that time, wanting in Talmudical scholars. When but a youth, as in the case of Ibn Gebirol, the Muse aroused him; not, however, like the latter, with mournful tones, but with pure joyful strains. He celebrated in song the happy experiences of his friends and comrades, the nuptials of Ibn Migash, the birth of the first-born in the house of Baruch Ibn Albalia (about 1100). Fortune smiled upon this favourite of the Muses from his youth, and no harsh discord ever issued from his poetical heart. In the south of Spain he was on intimate terms with the noble and cultured family of Ibn Ezra. When he learnt that Moses

Ibn Ezra had met with a disappointment in love and exiled himself, the young poet sought out his brother-poet, who was older, to comfort and soothe him with his songs. The latter was struck with surprise at Jehuda's beautiful verses and thoughtful sentiments.

Jehuda Halevi appears to have been still in Lucena when Alfassi died, and Joseph Ibn Migash succeeded him in the office of Rabbi (1103). On the occasion of his death Halevi composed a beautiful elegy, and at the same time celebrated the accession of his successor in a poem expressing his homage and deep respect. The young man also experienced both the pleasure and pain of love; he sang of the gazelle-like eyes of his beloved, her rosy lips, her raven hair. He sorely complained of her unfaithfulness, and of the wounds which rent his heart. His amatory poems breathe the fire of youth and display rash impetuosity. The southern skies were portrayed in his verses together with the green meadows and the blue streams. Already his early poetry bears the stamp of artistic polish, of rich fancy and beautiful symmetry, ardour and loveliness. There is no mere jingle of words, no thoughtless utterance—all manifests harmony and firmness of touch. Jehuda Halevi appears to have completely overcome the trials of love, for no traces whatever are to be found of it in his later life and poems.

Jehuda Halevi made himself so fully acquainted with the Hebrew language and the artistic forms of the Neo-Hebraic poetry that he was complete master of both. He also obtained a thorough knowledge of the Talmud, occupied himself in natural science, penetrated even the depths of metaphysics, and was skilled in all branches of learning. He wrote Arabic elegantly, and he was conversant with the new-born Castilian poetry. He obtained a livelihood as a physician, and he

practised on returning to his native place. He appears to have been highly esteemed as a doctor, for on one occasion he wrote to a friend that he was busily engaged, as he lived in a large town. But, in spite of his being employed in tending the bodies of the sick and dying, his soul remained firm, and he maintained the ideal course of his life. The following letter which, when advanced in years (about 1130), he wrote to a friend, is interesting:—

“I occupy myself in the hours which belong neither to the day nor to the night with the vanity of medical science, although I am unable to heal. The city in which I dwell is large, the inhabitants are giants, but there are cruel rulers. Wherewith could I quiet them, whilst I spend my days in curing their illness! I heal Babel, but it continues infirm. I cry to God that He should quickly send deliverance unto me, and give me my freedom, to enjoy rest, that I might roam to some place of living knowledge, to the fountain of wisdom.”

The city of which Jehuda here speaks is Toledo, where he passed the years of his manhood. He longed, however, to depart thence, as Toledo was not a centre of Jewish learning.

The whole power of his creative genius he bestowed upon the art of poetry, and a thoughtful investigation of Judaism. He had a more correct conception of poetry, which he valued as something holy and emanating from God, than had his Arab and Jewish contemporaries. He distinctly enunciated the view that the faculty for composing poetry must be innate, original, and not an art to be acquired. He mocked at those who laid down rules about metre and rhyme, and were very precise on those points. The truly inspired poet makes his own rules, and will never be guilty of any blunders or inaccuracies. As long as he was young he dissipated the gold of his rich poetry on light, flimsy tinsel, and following the example of others, wrote sparkling lyrics, in which he glorified his numerous friends. He sang of wine and pleasure, and composed riddles. When his friends rebuked him for

this conduct (about 1110), he retorted in youthful insolence—

“Shall he, who four and twenty years has not seen run,
Relinquish all his joys, and the wine-barrel shun.”

In this lightly-written poetry he succeeded in overcoming the difficulty of artistic versification. Very often he concluded a poem with an Arabic or Castilian verse. One recognises in the words and structure the great master who had the power of representing a complete picture by a few bold strokes of the pen. His delineations of nature might be placed side by side with the best poetical productions of all languages. We see the flowers bursting forth and blooming; we inhale in deep draughts the balm with which his verse is impregnated. The boughs bend beneath the burden of their golden fruit; we hear the songsters of the air pouring forth their sweet strains of love; he paints sunshine and the pure air with a masterly hand. When he is describing the rising of a tempest-tossed sea, he communicates to the reader all the emotions of sublimity and anxiety which he himself felt. But in all this the working of his great soul is not revealed; it was only in a manner the tribute which he paid to the human part of it and to the fashion of the time. His religious poems, which in number were not exceeded by his older fellow-poet Moses Ibn Ezra, for they amount to three hundred, but which in depth, heartfelt fervour, and polish, surpass him as well as other predecessors, do not once disclose the true greatness of his poetical genius.

The importance of Jehuda Halevi as a poet lies in those poems that breathe a national spirit. In these his ideas come from the depths of his heart, his whole being rises upwards in ecstasy, and when he sings of Zion and its past and future glory, when he veils his head in mourning over its present slavery, we find the true spirit of his poetry with

nothing artificial or simulated, but all pervaded by strong feeling. Jehuda Halevi's Songs of Zion may be compared, in contrast to all other Neo-Hebraic poetry, with the Psalms. When he is breathing forth his laments for Zion's widowhood, or dreaming of her future splendour, and depicts how she will again be united to her God and her children, we fancy we are listening to one of the Sons of Korah. The Muse of Jehuda Halevi, when quite mature, had a great aim; it was to sing of Israel, his God and the sanctuary, his past and his future, and to lament his humiliation. He was the national poet, and hence it is that his songs seize upon the Jewish reader with irresistible force. The complaints of Ibn Gebirol about his own deserted condition may arouse only faint interest; the sufferings of Moses Ibn Ezra on account of his unfortunate love, may leave us unaffected; but the affliction of Jehuda Halevi, on account of his dearly beloved Zion, cannot fail to move every susceptible heart.

The national poetry of Jehuda Halevi is of the higher value, since it has its source not in mere poetical sentiments, but in earnest and impassioned conviction. He was not alone the perfect poet, he was also the spiritual thinker; but in such a manner that feeling and thought were blended together in his heart as one. Poetry and philosophy were intimately united within him, not as something strange, borrowed, or artificially acquired, but as an innate faculty. Just as he gave expression to the national feelings of Israel in his Songs of Zion, so he interpreted, if one may say so, the national thoughts of Judaism in an ingenious and spiritual manner. Poetry and philosophy were only employed by him to glorify and spiritualise the inheritance of Israel. He gave forth his own ideas on the relation of God and the world, of man to his Creator, on the value of metaphysical speculation, of its connection with Judaism, and on the import-

ance of this religion as contrasted with Christianity and Islam. All these profound incisive problems he solved not in a dry, scholastic fashion, but in a lively, interesting, and convincing manner. If in his lyrics we may liken him to a Son of Korah, in the development of his conceptions he resembles the author of Job, but he is more rich in matter, more profound, more comprehensive. From this latter book Jehuda Halevi borrowed the form of his religious philosophical system (or it may be from the poetical philosophy of Plato). He contrasts his thoughts in the form of a dialogue, but also, like the author of Job, combines them in a historic sequence as matters of fact, a form in which the interest for the theme grows much more intense, and conveys a lasting impression. When certain of his disciples asked him how he could defend Rabbinical Judaism, and how reply to the objections hurled against it by philosophy, Christianity, Islam and the Karaites, he produced his answer in a comprehensive, erudite work, in the form of a dialogue written in elegant Arabic. As its title denotes, the book was intended to demonstrate the truth of Judaism and to justify the despised religion.

A heathen, who knew nothing of the wisdom of the schoolmen, or of the three existing religions, but who felt the necessity of placing himself in a spiritual, affectionate union with his Creator, is convinced of the truth of Judaism. This heathen is Bulan, the King of the Chazars, who himself embraced the Jewish faith. This man the Castilian philosopher employs to give historical character to his work, and hence it bears the name of Chozari (wrongly spelt Kusari). The cleverly-written preface, being thus clothed in fact, stirs the interest of the reader.

An angel appeared repeatedly in a dream to the King of the Chazars, who was a zealous adherent

of idol-worship but had pious intentions, and addressed to him these very significant words:—"Thy intention is good, but not so the manner in which thou servest God." In order to ascertain with certainty in what manner the Deity should be worshipped, the king applied to a Philosopher. This sage, a follower partly of the Aristotelian and partly of the Neo-Platonic system, fostered in the king more of disbelief than belief. He told him the very reverse of that which the king desired to hear, viz., that God was too exalted to come into any relation with man whatsoever, or to demand any reverential worship.

The King of the Chazars did not feel at all satisfied with this comfortless exposition. He felt that acts of divine worship must be of absolute value in themselves, for without these, pious and moral thoughts could be of but little merit. It was impossible to understand how, if the worship of God was to be an altogether indifferent matter, Christianity and Islam, which had divided the world between them, should war against each other, and even consider mutual slaughter as a holy work whereby Paradise might be attained. Both religions, moreover, appeal to Divine manifestations and wise prophets, through whose agency the Deity has worked miracles. God must then, in some way, be in relation to mankind. There must exist something full of mystery of which the philosophers have no notion. Thereupon the king determined to apply to a representative of the Christian faith, and to a Mahometan in order to learn from them the true religion. He did not think of asking the counsel of the Jews at first, because from their abject condition and the universal contempt in which they were held, the degraded state of their religion was sufficiently apparent.

A priest acted as the exponent of the tenets of the Christian belief to the king. Christianity believes in the eternity of God and the creation of

the world, and that all men are descended from Adam; it accepts as true all that the Torah and the scriptures of Judaism teach, but holds as its fundamental dogma, the Incarnation of the Deity through a virgin of the Jewish royal house. The Son of God is identical with the Father and the Holy Ghost. This Trinity is venerated by the Christians as a Unity, even though the phrase appears to indicate a threefold personality, Christians being considered as the real Israelites, and the twelve Apostles taking the place of the twelve tribes.

The mind of the king was as little gratified by the answer of the Christian as by that of the Philosopher, the reply not being in accordance with the dictates of reason. The Christian should have adduced positive, incontrovertible proofs, which would have satisfied the human intellect. He therefore felt it his duty to seek further for true religion.

Thereupon he inquired of a Mahometan theologian as to the basis of the faith of Islam. The Moslem believed, as he affirmed, in the Unity and Eternity of God, and in the *Creatio ex nihilo*; in the direct communication of God with man; but rejected anthropomorphic conceptions. Mahomet was the last and most important among the prophets, who summoned all people to the faith, and promised to the faithful a Paradise with all the delights of eating, drinking, and voluptuous love, but to the infidels the eternal fire of damnation. The truth of Islam depends upon the fact that no man is capable of producing such a remarkable book as the Koran, or even a single one of its Suras. To him also the king replied that the fact of the intimate intercourse of God with mortals must rest upon undeniable proofs which the internal evidence for the divine origin of the Koran does not afford, for even if its diction is able to convince an Arab, it has no power over those who are unacquainted with Arabic.

As the Christian and Moslem had referred both their religions to Judaism in order to verify the historic basis of each, the truth-seeking king at length determined to overcome his prejudice against Judaism, and to make inquiries of a Jewish sage. The latter made the following statement of the tenets of his creed in reply to the request of the king:—"The Jews believe in the God of their ancestors who delivered the Israelites from Egypt, performed miracles for their sake, led them into the Holy Land, and raised up prophets in their midst—in short, in all that is taught in the Holy Scriptures." Thereupon the king of the Chazars replied, "I was right then in not asking of the Jews, because their wretched, low condition has destroyed every reasonable idea in them. You, O Jew, should have premised that you believe in the Creator and Ruler of the world, instead of giving me such a dry and unattractive mass of facts which are of significance only to you." The Jewish sage replied: "This notion that God is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe requires a lengthy demonstration, and the philosophers have different opinions on the matter. The belief, however, that God performed miracles for us Israelites demands no proof, as it depends upon the evidence of undoubted eye-witnesses." Starting from this point of discrimination, the philosopher of religion, Jehuda Halevi, has an easy task to unfold proofs of the truth and divine character of Judaism. Philosophy is acquainted with God and religion only from what is to be observed in nature; it is in possession of no definite facts wherewith to set out. Christianity and Islam turn their backs on reason, for they find reason in opposition to the cardinal doctrines of their religions. Judaism, on the contrary, starts from a statement of observed facts, which reason cannot possibly explain away. It is quite compatible with reason, keeps within its limits, and does not yield easy ad-

mittance to the sophistry of irrational arguments, when certainty is to be attained in another way.

In his correct view of the value of speculative thought, Jehuda Halevi stood alone not only in his own time, but he anticipated many centuries. The thinkers of his time, Jewish, Mahometan and Christian, Rabbi, Ulema and Churchman, bowed the knee to Aristotle, whose philosophical judgments upon God and his relation to the world they placed above Holy Writ, or at least they strained and subtilized the Biblical verses until they were forced to express a philosophical idea, and thus in one breath were believers and sceptics. Jehuda Halevi alone had the courage to point out the limits set by nature to human thought, and to proclaim, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." Philosophy has no right to attack well-accredited facts, but must accept them as undeniable truths; it must start with them for bases, and bringing to bear its power of establishing the reality of facts, must illuminate them by the aid of reason. Just as in the realm of nature the intellect dare not deny actual phenomena as they are presented, however striking and contrary to reason they may appear, but must busy itself in comprehending them, so must it act when touching on the question of the knowledge of God. This excellent and bold idea, which of late years, after many wanderings in the labyrinth of philosophy has at length discovered a way for itself, was first enunciated by Jehuda Halevi. In a poem, which is as beautiful as its matter is true, he thus expresses his opinion of the Greek spirit which studious disciples of philosophy so eagerly affected:—

"Do not be enticed by the wisdom of the Greeks,
Which only bears fair blossoms, but no fruit.
What is its essence? That God created not the world,
Which, ever from the first, was enshrouded in myths.
If to its words you lend a ready ear, you
Return with chattering mouth, heart void, unsatisfied."

Judaism cannot, according to this system, be

assailed by philosophy at all, because it stands on a firm basis, which the thinker must respect, "the basis of historical facts." The Jewish religion entered the world not gradually, little by little, but suddenly, like something newly created. It was revealed to a vast multitude—to millions of men—who had sufficient means of inquiring and investigating as to whether they were deceived by some trickery. Moreover, all the miracles that preceded the revelation on Sinai, and continued during the wandering in the desert, took place in the presence of many people. Not only on one occasion, the beginning of Israel's nationality, was the evident interference of God manifested, but it revealed itself more often, for about five hundred years after, in the outpouring of the spirit of prophecy upon certain individuals and in a prescribed area. By virtue of this character, of the confirmed authenticity of these facts, Judaism is invested with a certainty greater than that produced by ordinary wisdom. The existence of God is demonstrated more powerfully by the revelation of Sinai than by the conclusions of the intellect. Jehuda Halevi believed that he had not only cut away the ground from beneath the philosophical views of his time, but that he had also undermined the foundations both of Christianity and Islam, and laid down the criterion by which the true could be distinguished from the false religion. Judaism does not feed its adherents with the hope of a future world—full of bliss—but directs them here on earth to glance at the heavenly kingdom, and raises, through an enduring chain of indisputable facts, the hope of the immortality of the soul to the plane of absolute certainty.

Whilst thus giving the general principles of Judaism, he had so far not described it in complete detail. In order to do this Jehuda Halevi propounded a view which is in every way original and

ingenious. The truth of the Creation, as related in the Torah, being pre-supposed, he starts from the fact that Adam was in soul and body completely perfect when he came from the hand of the Creator, without any disturbing ancestral influences, and the ideal, after which man should strive, was set forth in all its purity. All truths which are accessible to the human soul might have been known to Adam without any wearisome study, but by his innate consciousness he would, so to speak, have possessed a prophetic nature, and be called the son of God. This perfection, this spiritual and moral *summum bonum*, he bequeathed to those of his descendants who, by virtue of their spiritual fitness, were capable of receiving it. Through a long chain of ancestors, with some slight interruptions, this innate virtue passed to Abraham, the founder of the family of the Israelites, and thence to the fathers of the Twelve Tribes. The people of Israel thus represents the heart and kernel of the human race, and through divine grace, and especially through the gift of prophecy, it was peculiarly fitted for this position. Such an ideal nature elevates the possessor to a higher degree ; it is in a manner identical with the intermediate step between man and the angels. In order to attain and preserve this divine peculiarity, it is necessary to have some place which, on account of the circumstances of the climate, should be of help in promoting a higher spiritual life. For this purpose God selected the land of Canaan. The Holy Land was specially chosen just as the nation of Israel was, since it lies at the centre of the earth. There the theocratic character of the state was distinctly marked by the inspiration of prophets and the sending of blessings or curses, which were supernatural and altogether quite extraordinary. The precepts and prohibitions which Judaism ordains are means whereby the divinely prophetic nature in the Israelite nation might be nurtured and preserved.

To this end the priests of the house of Aaron were appointed, the Temple erected, the sacrificial laws and the whole code established. God alone, whence all these laws emanated, knows in how far they aid in furthering this great aim. Human wisdom durst not find fault with or change them, because the most unimportant alteration might easily cause the grand end to be lost sight of, even as nature brings forth varied productions by slight changes of the soil and climate. The duties of morality, or the laws of reason, do not constitute the peculiarity of Judaism as many imagine. These are rather the bases for settling the constitution of the Commonwealth, just as even a robber band cannot dispense with justice and fairness if it wishes to hold together. The duties of religion are the true essentials of Judaism, and are intended to preserve in the people of Israel divine light and grace, and permanent prophetic inspiration.

Though the exact significance of the laws of religion is rightly withheld from human understanding, the wisdom of their originator is yet reflected in them. Judaism involves neither the life of a hermit nor ascetic mortification; and, being the opponent of brooding melancholy, it desires to see in its followers a joyful disposition. It indicates the limits of the soul's activity and the promptings of the heart, and thus maintains the individual and communal life of the nation in one harmonious whole. A pious man, from a Jewish point of view, does not flee from the world, nor despise life and desire death in order the quicker to obtain eternal life; he does not deny himself the pleasures of life, but is an upright guardian over his own territory, over the organism of both his body and soul. He assigns what is fitting to every faculty of the body and soul, protects them against want and superfluity, thereby making them pliable, and employs them as willing instruments in aiming at

that sublime degree of the higher existence which emanates directly from the Deity.

After Jehuda Halevi had discovered the great value of religious action, it was an easy task for him to prove the superiority of Talmudical Judaism over Karaism, and also to invest it with a higher splendour as opposed to Islam and Christianity. The condition of slavery into which Israel had fallen, whilst scattered among the nations of the earth, is, according to the view of the poetical philosopher, no evidence of its decay, or a reason for abandoning hope. In the same manner the temporal power, in which Christians and Moslems equally pride themselves, is no proof of the divinity of their doctrines. Poverty and misery, being despised in the eyes of man, are of higher merit with God than inflated pride and greatness. The Christians also are not so proud of their mighty princes as of humble men such as Jesus (who commanded that "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also"), and of their apostles who suffered martyrdom in humiliation and with contumely. Also the Moslems take pride in the followers of their Prophet who endured much suffering on his account. The greatest sufferer, however, is Israel, since he is among men what the heart is in the human organism. Just as the heart sustains the most acute share of bodily pain, the Jewish nation was most unmercifully treated in every calamity that was inflicted, whether owing to its own fault or not. The words which the great Prophet represents the nations of the world as saying apply to Israel: "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." The Jewish people, in spite of the unspeakable agonies it has gone through, has not perished; it may be likened to a person who is dangerously ill, whom the skill of the physician has entirely given up, but who expects to be saved by some miracle. The picture of the scattered,

lifeless bones, which at the word of the prophet unite together, are clothed with flesh and skin, have a new breath breathed into them, and again stand erect, also applies to Israel; it is a complete description of Israel in its despoiled and low condition. The dispersion of Israel is a miraculous divine plan devised to impart to the nations of the earth the spirit with which Israel is endowed. The race of Israel resembles a grain of seed, which, placed in the ground, apparently rots away for some time; it then appears to have become changed and absorbed into the elements of its surroundings, leaving no traces of its former existence. It next buds and blossoms forth, again assumes its original nature, and bursts asunder the disfiguring husk which envelops it. It finally displays its own vital force, which flourishes according to the wonted manner of the seed, till it arrives step by step to its highest development. As soon as mankind, prepared by Christianity and Islam, agrees to recognise the true importance of the Jewish nation as the bearer of the divine light, they will also pay due honour to its sources, which they had hitherto looked upon with contempt. They will become one with the original stem, and having developed into glorious fruit, will finally enter the Messianic kingdom, which is the true fruit of the tree.

Certainly the exalted significance of Judaism and its people, as here described, was never more eloquently preached. Thought and feelings, philosophy and poetry, all combined in this original system of Jehuda of Castile, in order to set forth a sublime ideal that should prove to be the point of union between heaven and earth.

Abulhassan Jehuda did not belong to that class of men who form noble conceptions, but who lead a contemptible life. In him thought and deed were identical. As soon as he had come to the conclusion that the Hebrew language and the land of Canaan

possessed a peculiarly divine character, that the consecrated vessels were of holy purpose, he brought this conviction to bear upon his course of action. The treasures of his poetical genius he left uncultivated for a long time, because he considered it a profanation to employ the Hebrew language in imitating the Arabic metres. The philosophical poet was firmly convinced, moreover, that the Holy Land bore traces of the divine grace. His poetic soul was filled with the spiritual glory of Palestine. From the decayed splendour of its desolate condition one might still inhale higher aspirations. The bitterest pangs of sorrow penetrated his heart at the thought of the sacred ruins. For him the gates of heaven were to be found now as ever at the doors of Jerusalem, whence poured forth that divine grace which enabled the appreciative mind to attain to happiness and a higher state of repose. Thither would he go, there live according to the dictates of his innermost heart, and there would he be animated by the divine breath. When he began his work on the philosophy of religion, he spoke in mournful tones of the fact that he, like many others, was so insensible to the merits of the Holy Land, that whilst with his lips he expressed a longing for it, he never attempted to realise this desire. The more, however, he meditated upon the importance of the Holy Land as a place where the divine gift of grace could be obtained, the stronger his determination grew to journey thither and there spend his last days.

This irresistible impulse towards Zion, the favoured city gave birth to a wreath of deeply-impassioned songs, which are as full of true feeling as they are beautiful in form. The songs of Zion, composed by Jehuda Halevi, represent the highest fruits of Neo-Hebraic poetry, and they may well be compared with the Psalms :

“O City of the world, beauteous in proud splendour,
From the far West, behold me solicitous on thy behalf!
Oh that I had eagle’s wings, that I might fly to thee,
Till I wet thy dust with my flowing tears!
My heart is in the East,
Whilst I tarry in the West.
How may I be joyous,
Or where find my pleasure?
How fulfil my vow,
O Zion! when I am in the power of Edom,
And bend beneath Arabia’s yoke?
Truly Spain’s welfare concerns me not;
Let me but behold thy precious dust,
And gaze upon the spot where once the Temple stood.”

This is the key-note that pervades all the Songs of Zion. But in how many and in what various ways does the poet skilfully manipulate his subject! What a wealth of sentiments, images and devices, does he develop! The ancient days of the Israelites assume in his verses a more purified form; the people of his own age at one time appear invested with the thorny crown of a thousand sufferings, and at another with the glittering diadem of a glorious hope. The contents of his lyrics unwittingly penetrate into the soul of the reader, and hurry him to and fro, from pain and woe to hope and rejoicing, and for a long time the deep impression remains, intermingled with feelings of enthusiasm and conviction.

The bard, who was thus inspired with the cause of his nation, busied himself in communicating to his brethren this deep longing for Jerusalem, and this aroused them to arrange some plan of return. One poem, in elevated and delightful strains, encouraged the people, “The Distant Dove,” to leave the fields of Edom and Arabia (of Christendom and Mahometanism), and to seek its native nest in Zion. But no answering voice was awakened. It was a sublime ideal conception that impelled the pious poet philosopher even to dream of such a daring flight.

The soul of Jehuda Halevi was drawn by invisible

cords towards its original home, and he could not detach it from them. When he had concluded his immortal work, the dialogue of the *Chozari* (about 1141), he entertained serious thoughts of starting on his holy journey. He made no slight sacrifices to this praiseworthy, if somewhat adventurous, resolve. He exchanged a peaceful, comfortable life, for one of disquietude and uncertainty, and left behind his only daughter and his grandson, whom he loved most dearly. He gave up his College which he had established in Toledo, and parted from a circle of pupils whom he loved as his own sons, and who in turn revered him as a father. He bade farewell to his numerous friends, who, without envy, praised him as a distinguished scholar. All this in his estimation was of little value in comparison with his love of God and the Holy Land. He desired to bring his heart as an offering to the sacred place, and to find his grave in sanctified earth.

Provided with ample means, Jehuda Halevi started on his journey, and his passage through Spain resembled a triumph. His numerous admirers in the towns through which he passed outvied each other in attentions to him. With a few faithful companions he took ship on board a vessel that was bound for Egypt. Confined in the narrow wooden cabins, where there was no room either to sit or to lie down, a mark for the coarse jests of the rough mariners, sea-sick and in weak health, his soul yet lost none of the desire to elevate itself into a brighter sphere. His ideals were his most trusty companions. The storm which tossed the ships about on the waves like a plaything, when "between him and death there intervened only a board," unlocked the store of song within his breast. Of the sea he sang songs which for faithfulness of description and depth of feeling have few equals:

“The sea rages, my soul rejoices ;
It draws near the temple of its God !”

Delayed by adverse winds, the ship arrived at Alexandria at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (September), and Jehuda betook himself to his co-religionists with the firm determination to spend but a short time with them, and never to forget the aim of his journey. But as soon as his name became known, all hearts were drawn towards him. The most distinguished man of the Alexandrian congregation, the physician and Rabbi Aaron Ben-Zion Ibn Alamâni, who was blessed with prosperity and children, and was himself a liturgical poet, hastened to receive him in his house as a noble guest, showed him the highest honour, and placed his hospitable mansion at the disposal of Halevi and his comrades. Under the careful treatment of cordial friends, he recovered from the effects of his sea voyage, and expressed his gratitude in beautiful Hebrew verses. The family of Ibn Alamâni were so urgent in their desire to keep him with them, that in spite of his great longing for Jerusalem, he remained for nearly three months at Alexandria till the Feast of Dedication. He tore himself away by force from such dear friends, and travelled towards the port of Damietta, where dwelt one of his best friends Abu Said ben Chalfon Halevi, whose acquaintance he had already made in Spain. He was however compelled to alter the course of his journey, for the Jewish prince Abu Mansur Samuel ben Chananya, who held a high post at the Court of the Egyptian Caliph, sent him a pressing letter of invitation.

Abu Mansur, who dwelt in the palace of the Caliph, appears to have been head of the Jewish congregations in Egypt, bearing the title of Prince (Nagid). Jehuda Halevi was the less able to decline this flattering invitation, as it was necessary for him to obtain from the Jewish prince, whose fame

was widespread, letters of recommendation for the continuance of his pilgrimage towards Palestine. The intimation of Abu Mansur that he was willing to aid him with large supplies of money, he delicately put aside in a letter, saying, "that God had blessed him so munificently with benefits, that he had brought much with him from home, and had still left plenty behind." He followed his letter in a Nile boat. The wonderful river awoke in him memories of the Jewish past, and reminded him of his vow. He immortalised this remembrance in two beautiful poems. He was warmly received by the Prince Abu Mansur in Cairo and basked in the sunshine of his splendour, and sang of his liberality, renown, and of his three noble sons. He made but a brief stay in Cairo, and hastened to the port of Damietta, which he reached on the Fast of Tebet (December, about 1141, 1142). Here he was well received by many friends, and especially by his old friend, Abu Said Chalfon Halevi, a man of great distinction. He dedicated some beautiful poems of thanks to him and his other friends. These friends also attempted to dissuade him from proceeding to Palestine; they pictured to him the dangers which he would encounter, and remarked to him that memories of the power of the Divine grace in the early days of the history of the Jews were connected also with Egypt. He, however, replied, "In Egypt providence only manifested itself as it in haste, but it took up a permanent residence for the first time in the Holy Land." At length he parted from his friends and admirers, determined to carry his project into effect. It is not known at what place he next stopped.

In Palestine, at this time, Christian kings and princes, the kinsmen of the hero Godfrey of Bouillon, were the rulers, and these permitted the Jews again to dwell in the Holy Land, and in the capital, which had now become Christian. The

country, at the time of Jehuda's pilgrimage, was undisturbed by war; for the Christians who had settled in Palestine a generation ago, the effeminate Pullani, loved peace, and purchased it at any price from their enemies, the Mahometan Emirs. The Jews were also in favour at the petty courts of the Christian princes of Palestine, and a Christian bishop complained that owing to the influence of their wives they placed greater confidence in Jewish, Samaritan, and Saracen physicians, than in Latin (that is, Christian) ones. Probably this was because the latter were mere mountebanks.

Jehuda Halevi appears to have reached the goal of his desire, and to have visited Jerusalem, but only for a short time. The Christian inhabitants of the Holy City seem to have been very hostile to him, and to have inspired him with a disgust towards them. It is to this, probably, that his earnest, religious poem refers, in the middle verses of which he laments as follows:—

“ Mine eye longed to behold Thy glory,
But, as if I were deemed unworthy,
I could only tread on the threshold of Thy Temple.
I must also endure the sufferings of my people;
Therefore I wander aimlessly about,
As I dare not pay homage to any other being.”

The closing adventures of his life remain unknown, beyond the fact that he was at Tyre and Damascus. The Jewish community at Tyre rendered great honour to him, and the memory of this treatment was impressed on his grateful heart. In a poem to his Tyrian friend he grieves over his faded hopes, his misspent youth, and his present wretchedness, in verses which cannot be read without stirring up emotions at the despondency of this valorous warrior. In Damascus he sang his Swan-song, the glorious Songs of Zion, which, like the Psalms of Asaph, awake a longing for Jerusalem. The year of his death and the site of

his grave are both unknown. A legend says that a Mahometan horseman rode over him as he was chanting his mournful Songs of Zion. Thus reads a short epitaph which an unknown admirer wrote for him :—

“Piety, meekness, and magnanimity
Declare, ‘Here rest we with Jehuda.’”

This does not convey, however, the smallest portion of what this ethereal and yet powerful personality represented. Jehuda Halevi was the ennobled image of the race of Israel conscious of itself, which seeks to display itself, in its past and in its future, in an intellectual and artistic form.

In Spain Jewish culture had arrived at its zenith, and had produced its most beautiful blossoms in the greatest of the Neo-Hebraic poets, and France now strove to equal this excellence.

The reigns of the two kings of the House of Capet, Louis VI. and VII. (1108—1180), were as favourable to the Jews as that of Louis the Pious. The congregations in the north of France lived in comfort and prosperity, which easily aroused envy against them. Their granaries were filled with corn, their cellars with wine, their magazines with merchandize, and their coffers with gold and silver. They did not possess house property, but had fields and vineyards, which were cultivated either by themselves or by Christian servants. It is said that half of the population of the city of Paris, which had not yet become of very great importance, consisted of Jews. The Jewish congregations were recognised as independent corporations, and had at their head their own mayor, with the title of Provost (*præpositus*), who was invested with authority to guard the interests of the Christian inhabitants as against the members of his own community, and to compel Christian debtors to pay their Jewish creditors, and even to arrest them.

The Jewish provost was chosen by the community, which election was ratified by the king, or the baron to whom the town belonged; Jews had dealings with the Court and held offices there. Jacob Tam, the greatest Rabbinical authority of this time, was on terms of intimacy with the king. Jewish theologians freely disputed with the clergy upon religious differences, and were able to express openly their true opinions upon the Trinity, the Virgin Mary, and the worship of saints, upon auricular confession and the miracle-working powers of relics.

Under these favourable circumstances of unrestricted tolerance, the Jewish sages of the north of France were able to obey the impulse to follow in the path which Rashi had marked out for them. To understand and explain the whole extent of the Talmud became a passion with the French Jews. Death had snatched away the Commentator on the Talmud in the midst of his labours at Troyes; his pupils exerted themselves to complete whatever had been left unfinished by him. He had bequeathed to his school a spirit of indefatigable research and close inquiry, of hair-splitting dialectic and of the art of fine discrimination, and they richly increased the inheritance. The correct and precise understanding of the Talmud was so sacred a matter to the minds of the pupils of Rashi, that they did not hesitate to subject the interpretations of their master to a severe criticism. But their veneration for him again was so great that they did not venture to offer their opinions independently, but attached them to the Commentaries of Rashi as "Supplements" (Tossafot). From this circumstance this school derives its name of Tossafists. In part, they supplied the omissions of Rashi, and also emended and expanded the explanations given by him. The chief characteristic of the method of the Tossafists is that they do not rely on authorities, but examine for themselves whether the point in question

is comprehensible to their own reason. On account of their deep scholarship and great erudition, the all-embracing Talmud, with its accompanying literature and its mass of learned discussions and contradictory statements, presented to the followers of this school arguments and opinions as clearly marked as an engraved picture. By means of their acuteness, they resolved with astonishing powers of discrimination every argument and every idea into its original elements; they completely dis severed things that appeared related, and such as seemed to be unconnected they brought into closer relationship. It is almost impossible to convey to the mind of the uninitiated any satisfactory notion of the critical and ingenious method of the Tossafists. They performed the most complete logical operations with the greatest ease, as if they were simple examples for the elementary instruction of children. The unyielding materials of the Talmud became quite malleable under their hands, and from them they fashioned surprising Halachic (legal) shapes and substances. For the circumstances of modern times they found plenty of analogies in past events which in a superficial examination would not attract any notice.

The circle of the earliest Tossafists included chiefly the relatives of Rashi, viz.: his two sons-in-law, Meir ben Samuel from Rameru (a small town near Troyes), and Jehuda ben Nathan (abbreviated into Riban), and later, his three grandsons Isaac, Samuel and Jacob Tam, the sons of Meir, and lastly a German, Isaac ben Asher Halevi (Riba) from Speyer, also connected with the family of Rashi.

Owing to the labours of the school of the Tossafists the study of the Talmud was divided into two branches: theoretical discussion, which treated of the fundamental comprehension of the parts of the Talmud (*Chiddushim*), and practical expositions of the application of the results arrived at in moral

duties, laws of marriage, and religious ritual (Pesakim, Responsa). This acute combination of methods was the cause of the institution of new laws.

In the presence of the study of the Talmud, which occupied all the genius of the Jews of the north of France and the Rhine, no other branch of science could be cultivated. Poetry did not thrive in a region where logic wielded the sceptre, and the imagination was only brought into play in order to fathom out new cases and applications. The interpretation of Scripture was also treated in a Talmudical manner. Most of the Tossafists were also expositors of the Bible; they did not, however, pay much attention to the exact meaning of the text, but gazed at it through the lens of Agadic explanation. Tossafot were written to elucidate the Pentateuch as well as the Talmud. Only two men can be recorded as famous exceptions, who returned from the exegesis according to the Agadic method (Derush) to the strict and rational elucidation of the text (Peshat); these are Joseph Kara and Samuel Meir (flourished about 1100—1160). Both of these have the greater importance since they were, in a measure, in opposition to their fathers, who adhered to the ingenious and Midrashic system of interpretation. Joseph Kara was the son of Simon Kara, a compiler of the Agada, the author of the Yalkut; and Samuel ben Meir had also been brought up by his grandfather Rashi and taught to pay very great respect to the Agada. Both of them forsook the old way, and busied themselves in the explanation of the text strictly in accordance with the rules of grammar. Samuel, who completed the Commentary of Rashi to Job and to some of the treatises of the Talmud, knew that his grandfather was so convinced of the correctness of rational exegesis, that he had declared he would, if strength were granted him, alter his Commentary to the

Pentateuch according to another principle. Samuel, called Rashbam, wrote, in this temperate style, a Commentary to the Pentateuch and the Five Megillot; and Joseph Kara wrote commentaries on the books of the Prophets and the Hagiographa. Samuel ben Meïr sought in his interpretation of the Holy Writ for the sense and the connection of the text, and did not shrink from giving explanations that appeared at variance with the Talmud, or sounded Karaitic.

CHAPTER XI.

PERSECUTIONS UNDER THE SECOND CRUSADE AND THE ALMOHADES.

Condition of the Jews in France—The Second Crusade—Peter the Venerable and the Monk Rudolph—Bernhard of Clairvaux and the Emperor Conrad—Protectors of the Jews—Persecutions under the Almohades—Abdulumen and his Edict—The Prince, Jehuda Ibn-Ezra—The Karaites in Spain—Jehuda Hadassi—The historian, Abraham Ibn-Daud, and his Philosophy—Abraham Ibn-Ezra—Rabbenu Tam.

1143—1170 C.E.

WHEN the greatest Neo-Hebraic poet complained, “Have we then a settled home in the West or in the East?” he may well have been filled with foreboding in his highly sensitive heart concerning the uncertainty of the position of his co-religionists. Only too soon was the Jewish race to recognise the awful truth that it possessed no dwelling-place on earth, and that it was only granted on sufferance the toleration it enjoyed in the lands of its exile. So long as the intolerant religious principles of the Church and of the Mosque remained indifferent and slumbered, either from mere habit or the self-interests of their adherents, the Jews were able to pass a tolerably happy life. As soon, however, as religious hatred was aroused, the dreadful consequences of torture and martyrdom fell upon Israel, who was again compelled to take up the wanderer’s staff, and with bleeding heart to depart from his dearly-beloved home. Although the Jews in general, and especially their leaders, the Rabbis

and Sages, were, on an average, superior to the Christian and Mahometan peoples in inner devotion to God, in purer morality, in higher knowledge and civilisation, yet those to whom the earth belonged imagined themselves on a higher level, and looked down with lordly haughtiness upon the Jews as common slaves. In Christian countries they were declared outlaws, because they would not believe in the Son of God and many other things; and in a Mahometan kingdom they were persecuted because they would not acknowledge Mahomet as a prophet. In one land they were expected to relinquish the power of their reason and to accept puerile tales as sober truths, and in another it was demanded of them that they should renounce their faith and take in its stead dry formulæ, tinged with philosophy. Both held out the cheerless choice between death and the recantation of their ancient religion. The men of France and Germany rivalled the savage Moors in the energy with which they strove to enfeeble yet further the weakest of the peoples. On the banks of the Seine, the Rhine and the Danube, on the shores of Africa and the south of Spain, there arose simultaneously, as if by agreement, a bloody persecution in the name of religion against the Jews, despite the fact that all which was good and divine in their oppressors' creeds owed its origin to this people. Hitherto persecutions of the Jews were few and far between; but from the year 1146 and onwards they became more frequent, fiercer, of greater severity, and more determined. It thus appeared as if the age during which the light of intelligence had begun to dawn upon mankind desired to excel in inhumanity the epochs of the darkest barbarism. This period of suffering imprinted on the Jewish people that air of patience, and the marked lineaments of martyrs, which even the present age of freedom is unable to efface. Upon this a clear-sighted writer, Ibn-Ezra, remarks, "The picture of the

prophet, in which he says, ‘He is scourged, and tortured, yet he openeth not his mouth,’ requires no further commentary, for every Jew in exile illustrates it. When he is afflicted he does not open his mouth to prove that he is more righteous than his tormentor. He keeps his look directed only towards God, and neither prince nor noble assists him in his distress.”

The persecutions that spread simultaneously over Europe and Africa had their sources in catastrophes that occurred in Asia and Africa. Whilst the Christian knights in the new kingdom of Jerusalem and in the neighbouring princedoms still slumbered, the Turkish warrior, Nureddin, who had determined to drive the Christians from Asia, began his attacks upon them. The important city of Edessa fell into his hands, and the Crusaders, now at their wits’ end, were compelled to implore help from Europe. The second Crusade was now preached in France and Germany, and bloodthirsty fanaticism was aroused anew against the Jews.

King Louis VII. of France, moved by conscientious feelings, himself took the Cross, and with him went the young and frivolous Queen Eleonora, together with the dames of the court, who must have transformed the camp of the warriors of God into a court of gallantry. The Abbot Bernhard, of Clairvaux, a truly pious man, of apostolic simplicity of heart, and renowned for his powerful eloquence, was very energetic in his exhortations to Christians to take part in this Crusade, and owing to his influence the troops of pilgrims marching against the infidels increased day by day. Just at that time Pope Eugenius III. turned the attention of the Crusaders towards the Jews. He issued a Bull announcing that all those who joined in the Holy War should not be compelled to pay to the Jews any interest for their debts. This was to entice the numerous debtors of the Jews to participate

in the Crusade, and was in reality only a veiled license to free themselves from their obligation to the Jews. The Abbot Bernhard, who at other times disdained to employ unholy means to a holy end, felt himself obliged, at the summons of the Pope, to preach upon this evasion or removal of all debts. Another abbot, Peter the Venerable, of Clugny, desired to push the matter still further. He instigated King Louis and the army of the Crusaders directly against the Jews. He heaped charge upon charge against them, and exaggerated their offences so as to incite the prejudiced monarch to order a persecution, or at least a wholesale pillage of the Jews. In a letter to Louis VII. he repeated the sophistical perversions which the marauding mobs of the First Crusade had invented, in order to palliate their plundering of the Jews in the name of religion.

“Of what use is it,” wrote Peter of Clugny, “to go forth to seek the enemies of Christendom in distant lands if the blasphemous Jews, who are much worse than the Saracens, are permitted in our very midst to scoff with impunity at Christ and the Sacrament! The Saracen at least believes as we do that Christ was born of a virgin, and yet he is execrable, since he denies the Incarnation. How much more these Jews who disbelieve and mock at everything? Yet, I do not require you to put to death these accursed beings, because it is written ‘Do not slay them.’ God does not wish to annihilate them, but like Cain, the fratricide, they must be made to suffer fearful torments, and continue reserved for greater ignominy, and to an existence more bitter than death. They are dependent on us in misery and agony; they are filled with dread and are accursed, and must remain in that state until they are converted to our Saviour. You ought not to kill them, but to afflict them in a manner befitting their subjection.” The holy man prevailed on the king to deprive the Jews either altogether or

in part of the possessions they had acquired, since the Crusading army, which was marching against the Saracens, did not spare its own property and lands, and certainly should not spare the ill-gotten treasures of the Jews. Only their bare life should be left to them, but their money forfeited, for the audacity of the Saracens would be more easily subdued if the hands of Christians were strengthened by the wealth of the blasphemous Jews. This method of reasoning is certainly consistent; it is the logic of the Middle Ages. King Louis, however well-disposed he might be towards the Jews, could not do less in obedience to the Papal Bull than allow the Crusaders to absolve themselves from their Jewish debts. For the moment their aim was directed to the plundering of the rich Jews, who were on that account no better off than their poorer brethren. The friendly monarch, together with his wise ministers, the Abbot Suger, and especially the pious Bernhard, who knew how to control men's minds, would not countenance a wholesale bloody persecution.

Affairs took another course in Germany, and particularly in the Rhine cities, whose congregations had barely recovered from the wounds of the First Crusade. The Emperor Conrad III. was powerless; the citizens who, as a whole, had taken the part of the Jews during the First Crusade, and had afforded them protection, were now, at the beginning of the Second Crusade, prepossessed against them. A French monk, named Rudolph, who had left his monastery without the permission of his superior, a man of fiery eloquence, kindled the fanaticism of the German people against the Jews. He believed that he was accomplishing a holy work in securing the conversion or annihilation of the infidels. From town to town, from village to village, Rudolph travelled preaching the Crusade, and he inserted in his addresses an exhortation that the Crusade should begin with the Jews. Matters would have been

much worse on this occasion than on the former for the German Jews had not the Emperor Conrad, who from the first felt an antipathy to the enthusiasm for the Crusade, concerned himself to look after their safety. In the lands which were his by inheritance, he set aside the city of Nuremberg and certain other fortresses as asylums for them, where the hand of the infuriated Crusader could not reach them. He had no power over the territories of the princes and prelates, but he appears to have impressed upon them all that they should extend their powerful protection to the Jews. Meanwhile, the word of the Emperor had no absolute authority. In August, 1146, there fell the first victims to the persecution stirred up by Rudolph. A man named Simon the Pious, of Treves, whilst on his way home from England, tarried in Cologne. He was instantly seized by the Crusaders as he was about to go on board a ship; they desired to subject him to a forced baptism, and on his refusal to accede to their wishes, he was murdered and his body mutilated. Shortly afterwards a woman named Minna, from the city of Speyer, was put to the terrible tortures of the rack, which she firmly endured, and yet remained steadfast to her faith. These occurrences caused the Jews dwelling by the Rhine to look round for protection. They paid immense sums to the princes, on condition that they granted them towns and castles for their safety. The Cardinal Bishop Arnold of Cologne gave to them the town of Wolkenburg, near Königswinter, and allowed them to defend themselves with arms. Wolkenburg became a refuge for many of the congregations of the district. As long as the Jews remained in their places of shelter they were hidden from sight and secure; but as soon as they ventured forth to see how their affairs were situated, the Christian pilgrims lay in ambush for them, dragged them away to be baptised, and killed those who resisted in a barbarous

manner. The prelates of the Rhine were, however, not favourable to the preaching of the Crusade as carried on by the monk Rudolph, nor did they approve of the massacre of the Jews, especially as on that account dissensions and feuds arose, and Rudolph even emboldened the populace to disobey the bishops. The Archbishop of Mayence, Henry I., who was at the same time Chancellor and Prime Minister to the Emperor, had admitted into his house some of the Jews who were being persecuted by the mob. The riotous crowd nevertheless forced its way in, and murdered them before his very eyes. The archbishop then turned to the most distinguished representative of Christianity of that time, Bernhard of Clairvaux, who had more power than the Pope. He depicted to him the outrages that Rudolph had fomented in the Rhine country, and prayed him to make his authority felt. Bernhard, who strongly disapproved of the doings of Rudolph, readily offered to give the Archbishop his support. He despatched a letter to the Archbishop of Mayence with orders for it to be read in public. In this letter he energetically condemned the agitator; he called Rudolph an outlawed son of the Church, who had fled from his cloister, had been faithless to the rules of his Order, maligned the bishops, and preached murder and massacre of the Jews against the principles of the Church and of true Christians. The Jews ought, on the contrary, to be carefully spared. The Church set its hope upon them that at a certain time they would be converted *en masse*, and a prayer for that especial purpose had been instituted for Good Friday. "Could the hope of the Church be fulfilled if the Jews are altogether annihilated?" Bernhard sent another letter in the same spirit to the clergy and people of France and Bavaria, wherein he expressly admonished them to spare the Jews.

Meanwhile, the letters of Bernhard made no impression upon Rudolph and the corrupt mobs; they were bent upon the complete destruction of the Jews, and on all sides lay in wait for them. The Abbot of Clairvaux accordingly found it necessary to protest in person against the slaughter of the Jews. When about this time he made a journey into Germany in order to induce the Emperor Conrad to take part in the Crusade, he tarried in the towns on the Rhine in order to counteract the fiendish plans of Rudolph. He addressed him in very severe terms, and prevailed on him to desist from preaching the massacre of the Jews, and to return to his monastery. The deluded people murmured against the proceedings of Bernhard, and had it not been for the protection afforded him by the odour of sanctity surrounding him, they would have attacked him. Rudolph disappeared from the public scene, but the poisonous seeds scattered abroad by him worked the destruction of the Jews. The more the bulk of the people became inflamed by the sermons of Bernhard on behalf of the Crusade the greater became its fury against the Jews. They were more consistent than the Saint of Clairvaux and the bishops, and could not be refuted by strict logic. They said, "If it is a godly deed to slay unbelieving Turks, it surely cannot be a sin to massacre unbelieving Jews." About this time some dismembered limbs of a Christian were discovered at Würzburg, and the Crusaders who were assembled there believed or pretended to believe that the Jews had butchered the man. They thus invented a pretext to make an attack upon the congregations at Würzburg. These were under the protection of the Bishop Embricho, and dwelt in such tranquillity in the city, that they had not deemed it necessary to provide a place of refuge for themselves. The terror which seized them was therefore the greater, when they were suddenly assaulted by a crowd of Crusaders

(22 Adar, 24 Feb., 1147). More than twenty of them met martyrs' deaths, among whom was the distinguished and gentle Rabbi Isaac ben Eliakim, who was slain whilst reading a holy book. Some were so cruelly maltreated that they were left by the murderers as dead, but were afterwards restored to life, and carefully tended by compassionate Christians. The humane Bishop of Würzburg allotted a resting-place in his own garden for the corpses of the martyrs, and sent those who yet remained alive into a castle near Würzburg. The lot of the German Jews became still more lamentable when the Emperor Conrad with his knights and generals joined in the Crusading expedition, and the mobs who were left behind, unchecked by the presence of the emperor, were at liberty to commit fearful outrages (the beginning of May, 1147).

The savage spirit of murder in the name of piety was rapidly communicated from Germany to France on the assembling of the Crusaders in the spring. In Carenton, in the Department de la Manche, there was a determined battle between the Christian pilgrims and the Jews. These latter had gathered themselves into a house and defended themselves against invasion. Two brothers, with the true courage of Frenchmen, fought like heroes, dealt wounds right and left, and slew many Crusaders, until their foes, now infuriated by the loss of so many men, found an entrance into the court, attacked the Jews in the rear and massacred them all. Among the martyrs of this time there also fell, in France, a young scholar named Peter, a pupil of Samuel ben Meïr and Tam, who, in spite of his youth, had already made himself a name among the Tossafists. At no great distance from the monastery of Clairvaux, under the eyes of the Abbot Bernhard, the savage bands of the Crusaders continued undismayed to carry on their bloody work. They fell upon the Jewish congregation at Rameru on the

second day of Pentecost, forced their way into the house of Jacob Tam, who was the most distinguished man among the European Jews on account of his virtues and learning, laid hands on all his possessions, tore to pieces a scroll of the Law, and dragged him into a field to put him to death with torture. As Tam was the most famous man among the Jews, the Crusaders desired to revenge on him the wounds and death of Jesus. They had already inflicted five wounds on his head, and he was about to succumb to these injuries, when fortunately a knight with whom he was acquainted happened to pass along the road. Tam still retained sufficient consciousness to implore help from him, which the knight promised to afford, on condition that he should receive a splendid horse as a reward. This unworthy knight then told the band of assassins to hand the victim over to him and he would either prevail on him to be baptized, or else return him to their hands. Thus was saved the man who was the leader and model of the German and French Jews (8 May, 1147). It is to be ascribed to the influence of Bernhard that no Jew hunts took place in France, except at Carenton, Rameru and Sully. In England, where since the time of William the Conqueror many Jews from France had settled who were in communication with the French congregations, there were no persecutions of the Jews, as King Stephen was strenuously opposed to illtreating them. The Jews of Bohemia, however, again suffered severely on the passage of the Crusaders through their country, 150 of them meeting with martyrs' deaths. Directly the French army of the Crusaders had marched through Germany, and had advanced beyond its borders, the Jews were able to leave their places of refuge in the castles and were no longer attacked. Even those Jews who had weakly submitted to compulsory baptism were now able to return to their ancient faith. A certain priest

who was as pious as he was humane, and whose name unfortunately has been lost, gave them very great assistance. He led those Jews who had been forcibly baptised into France and other districts, where they remained till their former adhesion to the church was forgotten. They then returned to their homes and their religion.

On the whole, the fanaticism of the Second Crusade devoured fewer Jewish victims than the First. This was partly owing to the interest taken by both the spiritual and temporal dignitaries in protecting the Jews, and also because the act of participation of the German Emperor and the King of France did not call into existence crowds of Crusading marauders, such as accompanied the expedition of William the Carpenter and Emicho of Leiningen. But the Jews were compelled to pay a high price for the shelter which was granted them, the price being their whole future. The German Emperor from this time forward was regarded by the Jews as their protector, and he considered himself as such, demanding in return some corresponding duties. The German Jews, who were hitherto as free as the Germans or Romans, henceforth became the "servants of the chamber" (*servi cameræ*) of the Germano-Roman empire. This hateful name at first only signified that the Jews were on the same footing as the Imperial servants; they enjoyed immunity from all attacks, and had to pay to the emperor and the empire for the protection thus granted to them regular taxes as defence-money, and they had to perform extraordinary services. But in later times the word was employed in its original odious sense, and the Jews were looked upon as bondsmen and dependent slaves. The German Jews who were desirous of rescuing themselves from a state of barbarism were thus hurled into the depths of an abysmal degradation, from which they were only enabled to raise themselves after a lapse of six hundred years. The

expressions of their genius bore for this reason the stamp of destitution, their poems consisted only of elegies and jeremiads, which were, like their speech, tasteless and barbaric, and even in the region of the Talmud very little work of note was accomplished. The German Jews were like Pariahs in history till the end of the eighteenth century. In France, on the other hand, where other political and social conditions prevailed, Jewish culture was vigorous enough to put forth bounteous blossoms.

Whilst the Jews of France and Germany still stood in dread of the troops of Crusaders, a persecution broke out in the north of Africa, which was of longer duration and produced different effects. It was stirred up by a man who combined the characters of philosopher, reformer and conqueror, and manifested a peculiar political and religious enthusiasm. Abdallah Ibn Tumart, who came from the north-west of Africa, was imbued with the fanatical notions of an austere enthusiast by the mystic philosopher Alghazali in Bagdad. On his return home to Africa he preached to the simple Moorish tribes simplicity of living and dress; hatred of poetry, music and painting, and war against the Almoravidian kings, who highly esteemed a life of refinement. On the other hand, Ibn Tumart rejected the Sunnite teachings of Mahometan orthodoxy, and the literal interpretation of the verses of the Koran, which affirmed that God had the feelings of man and was affected by the same emotions. He obtained a large following among the Moors, and founded a sect, whose members, from the fact that they maintained the true unity of God without any corporeal representations (Tauchid), were termed Almovachides or Almohades (Unitarians). The sect acknowledged Ibn Tumart as the Mahdi, as the heaven-sent Imam of Islam. With the tocsin of rebellion and the sword of war against the reigning Almoravides, Ibn Tumart spread his religious

and moral reformation in the north-west of Africa. After his death his disciple Abdilmumen succeeded to the leadership of the Almohades, and was recognised as the Prince of the Faithful (Emir al-Mumenin). He achieved victory after victory, and in his onward progress he destroyed the dynasty of the Almoravides, and became monarch of the whole of North Africa. Abdilmumen was however a fanatic. Just as he had extirpated the Almoravides with fire and sword, not only on the ground of their being political enemies, but also as professors of another belief, he would not suffer any other religion in his kingdom.

When the capital, Morocco, after a long and obstinate siege, fell into the hands of Abdilmumen, the new ruler summoned the numerous Jews of the town and addressed them in the following terms: "You do not believe in the mission of the prophet Mahomet, and you think that the Messiah, who has been announced to you, will confirm your law and strengthen your religion. Your forefathers, however, asserted that the Messiah would appear at the latest about half a century after the coming of Mahomet. Behold! this half a century has long passed, and no prophet has arisen in your midst. The patience which has been shown to you on these conditions must surely come to an end. We can no longer permit you to continue in your state of unbelief. We do not desire any more tribute from you. You have only the choice between the acceptance of Islamism and death." The perplexity of the Jews at this very serious proclamation was very great. It was the second time, since they had come under Mahometan rule, that this mournful alternative was offered to them, either to surrender their life or their faith. Moved by the representations that were made to him, Abdilmumen modified the edict of persecution, granting permission to the Jews to emigrate. He moreover

conceded to the intending exiles a space of time to dispose of the landed and movable property which they could not take with them. Those who preferred to remain in the African kingdom were constrained to accept Islamism, and in the event of resistance were put to death. Some, however, to whom Judaism was precious left Africa and wandered forth in the direction of Spain, Italy and other places. The majority of them, however, for the time being readily obeyed the edict, and took upon them the disguise of Islamism whilst hoping for more favourable times (1146).

The persecution was directed not only against the Jews of Morocco, but also against those who lived scattered about in North Africa, and as often as the Almohades captured a fresh city, the same edict was promulgated. The Christians also suffered through this persecution, but Christian Spain was open to them, where they might well expect to be received with open arms by their co-religionists. In these circumstances they were more steadfast, and departed from the country in large bodies. Synagogues and churches alike were destroyed throughout the whole country of the Almohades, which extended by degrees from the Atlas mountains as far as the boundary of Egypt, and travellers were at a loss to discover any trace that either Jews or Christians had formerly dwelt there.

Although many North-African Jews had ostensibly accepted Islamism, there were only a few who did so in real earnest. Indeed nothing further was demanded of them than to profess belief in the prophetic mission of Mahomet, and occasionally attend at the mosques. In private, however, they practised the Jewish rites in all their details, as the Almohades employed no police spies to observe the actions of the converts. Not only the common people, but also pious Rabbis maintained this outward semblance of belief, and reconciled

their conscience to it, since idolatry and the denial of Judaism were not demanded of them. They were simply required to utter the formula of belief that Mahomet was a prophet, which in truth was far from consenting to worship idols. Some consoled themselves with the hope that they would not continue in this state of constraint very long, for they expected that the Messiah would soon appear and deliver them from their misery.

Under the disguise of Moslems, the Maghreb Jewish scholars prosecuted the study of the Talmud with their usual zeal, and assembled at their colleges the studious youth, who at the same time were compelled to engage in the study of the Koran. Meanwhile, truly conscientious and pious men were unable to play this double part for any length of time. They threw off the hateful mask, openly professed Judaism, and on that account suffered martyrdom in Fez, Segelmessah, Draï, and in other towns.

The victorious Abdulmumen was not content with the possession of all Barbary; he regarded, with longing eyes, the fair land of Andalusia, and contemplated making it into a dependent province. He thought that it would be an easy task for him to wrest it from the power of the Almoravidian kings and the Christian rulers. The conquests in the Mahometan territory south of Spain proved easy, as the opposing factions were a source of weakness to each other. The capital of Andalusia, Cordova, fell into the power of the fanatical Almohades (in June, 1148), and before the end of a year the greater part of Andalusia was in their hands. The beautiful synagogues which the piety, the love of splendour, and the refined taste of the Andalusian Jews had helped to build, fell a prey to the destructive frenzy of fanaticism. The aged Rabbi of Cordova, the philosophically-inclined Joseph Ibn Zadik, survived this sad downfall of the oldest and

most distinguished congregation, but died soon after (at the end of 1148 or the commencement of 1149). The renowned Jewish academies at Seville and Lucena were closed. Meïr, the son and successor of Joseph Ibn Migash, wandered from Lucena to Toledo, and with him went all those who were able to escape from a compulsory conversion. The remainder followed the example of the African Jews, yielded for the moment to coercion, pretended to acknowledge Islamism, and in private observed their ancient faith, till they found an opportunity of openly declaring their Judaism. Women and children, together with the possessions of the exiles, fell into the hands of the conquerors, and those whose strength was feeble were made slaves.

In this dark epoch, when the centre of Judaism had lost its attraction, a favourable change of fortune created a new centre. Christian Spain, which had developed its greatest power under the Emperor Alfonso Raimundez (1126—1157), became a refuge for the persecuted exiles from Andalusia, and Toledo, which was raised to the position of capital of the kingdom, became a new focus, whence the rays of Jewish science emanated. This favourable change was owing to a man who deserves to be ranked with Ibn Shaprut. The wise and philanthropic Emperor Alfonso Raimundez had a Jewish favourite in the person of the still youthful Jehuda Ibn Ezra, the son of that Joseph Ibn Ezra, who, together with his three brothers, holds a distinguished place in Judæo-Spanish literature. On his taking permanent possession of the border fortress of Calatrava, which stands between Toledo and Cordova (1146), the emperor, probably as a reward for his bravery, appointed Ibn Ezra commander of the place, and promoted him to the office of Prince (Nasi).

Jehuda Ibn Ezra appeared as a rescuing angel to his unfortunate co-religionists, who were fleeing

before the fury of the persecution of the victorious Almohades. He assisted them to find homes and employment in Christian Spain, and utilised his riches in ransoming captives, in clothing the naked, and feeding the hungry. The congregation of Toledo was very much increased by the immigrant Jews. Meir Ibn Migash opened an academy for the study of the Talmud, and numerous pupils attended it. Jewish science, under the protection of the Christian king, now flourished in Toledo after its expulsion from the Mahometan kingdom.

Jehuda Ibn Ezra rose still higher in the favour of the Spanish emperor, and was appointed steward of the imperial house (about 1149). This Jewish prince in his zeal for Rabbanism permitted himself to be hurried into a persecution, which forms a blot on his fair fame. The Karaites who had settled in Christian Spain, and who towards the end of the eleventh century had suffered persecution at the hands of a Rabbanite favourite, Joseph Al-Kabri, had since that time again become a numerous body, and strove to regain their lost importance. They gave free admittance to the plentiful literature of their Eastern and Egyptian leaders into Castile, and were thereby strengthened in their deep antipathy to Rabbinical Judaism. At this time a Karaite of Constantinople, Jehuda ben Elia Hadassi, who styled himself "a Mourner for Zion" (ha-Abel), renewed the battle against the Rabbanites, and wrote a comprehensive book under the name of "Eshkol ha-Kofer," in which he discussed with great warmth the oft-disputed differences between the two Jewish schools (1149), and rekindled the flame of hostility. Jehuda Hadassi wrote with intense passion, employing harsh language in alphabetical acrostics, and a wretched monotonous rhyme. This malevolent work was probably introduced into Castile, and aroused the fire of conflict anew. Instead of having this polemical

book confuted by some able combatant, Jehuda Ibn Ezra called in the aid of secular weapons, and besought the gracious permission of the Emperor Alfonso, to allow him to persecute the Karaites. He did not consider that the dormant fire of persecution, if once re-animated, must sooner or later glow in bright flames around the head of the persecutors themselves. With the emperor's permission, Jehuda Ibn Ezra humbled the Karaites so sorely that they were never again able to raise their heads. Probably they were banished from the towns wherein Rabbanites dwelt (1150—57). In the meantime the favourable condition of the Jews in Castile did not last long. After the death of the emperor and of his eldest son, the King of Castile (1158), the days, which Jehuda Ibn Ezra probably lived to see, were very troubled. During the minority of the infant Alfonso a bitter civil war broke out between the noble houses of De Castro and De Lara, in which the other Christian kings took part; the fair land was devastated, and the capital, Toledo, made the scene of bloody fights. The Christian monarchs were not powerful enough to defend their borders against the continual irruptions of the Almohades, and were compelled to leave this task to the fanatical orders of knights, which had existed before, and were now again called to active service. The Spanish Jews, unlike their German and French brethren, did not remain mere indifferent onlookers during these political struggles and wars, but took the liveliest interest in all that was going on, joining one or the other of the opposing sides.

Meanwhile Jewish learning was in no wise impaired by the unfavourable conditions of the times which existed in almost every land of their exile, but still took its place in the vanguard of culture. Two men, both from Toledo, added new glory to the old; these were Abraham Ibn Daud and

Abraham Ibn Ezra, who, dissimilar as they were in character, aims, and in their life's history, were yet alike in their love for Judaism and learning. Abraham Ibn Daud Halevi (born about 1110, died a martyr 1180), who claimed descent on the maternal side from Prince Isaac Ibn Albalia, was not only well versed in the Talmud, but was also initiated in all the different branches of the science of the time. He, moreover, engaged himself in the study of history, both Jewish and general, as far as it was accessible to him in its threadbare condition in the Middle Ages. This occupation was but lightly esteemed by the Spanish Jews. In his ordinary life he was a physician, and was a diligent explorer into the realm of science. Ibn Daud possessed an intelligent, clear mind, which enabled him to penetrate with precision into the knowable, and to illumine the obscure. With brilliant perspicuity he sought to give expression to the most difficult ideas, and to make them comprehensible. He centred all his attention upon the highest problems of the human intellect, and was at a loss to conceive how anyone could spend his life in the pursuit of what he considered trifles, such as philology, mathematics, the theoretical study of medicine or of legal matters, instead of directing his mind to the most holy task of life. This task, according to the view of Ibn Daud, consists in philosophical study, because its object is the knowledge of God. It is only by virtue of this important duty that man, as the noblest being of the created world, possesses superiority. He emphasized this point with much stress against a certain class of his co-religionists in Spain, who stirred up a positive dislike to philosophy. Ibn Daud was well acquainted with the reason of this mistrust of independent research. There are many in our time, he remarks, who have dabbled a little in science, and who are not able to hold both lights, the light of belief in

the right hand and that of knowledge in the left. Since in such men the light of investigation has extinguished the lamp of belief, the multitude think that it is altogether dangerous, and draw themselves away from it. In Judaism, however, knowledge is a duty, and it is not right to spurn it.

The aim of all philosophical theory is the practical realisation of moral ends. Such ends Judaism presents. None of his predecessors had so definitely and clearly expressed this important central thought as Abraham Ibn Daud. Morality aims at establishing positive virtues, a healthy tone of household life and a sound constitution of the State, based upon this latter virtue. According to this view all the religious duties of Judaism may be divided into five classes. The first class inculcates the true knowledge of God and a purified belief in and love of One God. The second class treats especially of justice and scrupulousness (which is the head of all virtues), of placability, the absence of all envy, and the love of enemies, all of which have their origin in humility. A third class of precepts regulates the relation of the head of the family to his wife, children, and servants, according to the principles of right and affection. The fourth division, which comprises a large group, prescribes the relation of the citizen to the State and to his fellow-citizens; it inculcates the necessity of loving one's neighbour, of honesty in commerce, and interest for the weak and suffering. There is, finally, a fifth class of laws, such as the sacrificial and dietary laws (laws of the Ritual), whose origin cannot easily be discovered. These five groups of duties are not equal in importance to each other, as the laws of dogma take the highest position and ceremonial laws the lowest place, and the prophets also often gave greater prominence to the former. Starting from a different main principle,

Ibn Daud arrived at a conclusion differing from that of his companion in thought, Jehuda Halevi. Whilst, according to the latter, the pure ritual ordinances constitute the essence of Judaism, whereby the prophetic nature of man is to be healthily sustained, they possess only a second-rate importance for the former.

Abraham Ibn Daud was, however, not only a writer on religious philosophy, but also a conscientious historian, and his historical labours have proved of more service to Jewish literature than his philosophical studies. The newly-aroused conflict with the Karaites of Spain was the occasion which caused him to inquire into their history. After the death of the Emperor Alfonso, and the probably subsequent downfall of his favourite, Jehuda Ibn Ezra, these people again raised their heads and recommenced issuing their polemical writings. Thereupon he undertook to prove historically that Rabbinical Judaism was based on an unbroken chain of traditions which began with Moses and reached to Joseph Ibn Migash. To this end he compiled the history of Biblical, post-exilic, Talmudical, Saburaïc, Gaonic, and Rabbinical times in a chronological order (1161). He entitled this work, which was written in Hebrew, “The Order of Tradition” (*Seder ha-Kabbalah*). The information which he imparts concerning the rise and formation of the Spanish congregations is of the highest importance; he draws his knowledge either from the original labours of Samuel Ibn Nagrela, or from independent historical researches. His descriptions are brief, but in the main accurate and authentic, and it is easy enough to read between the lines. His Hebrew style is flowing, and not altogether wanting in poetic colouring.

A still more erudite, comprehensive, and profound character appears in Abraham ben Meïr Ibn Ezra of Toledo (born about 1088, died 1167). He

was a man of remarkable ability, who invested with equal excellence the greatest as well as the smallest things in science; he was energetic, ingenious, full of wit, but lacking in warmth of feeling. His extensive reading in all branches of divine and human knowledge was astonishing; he was also thoroughly acquainted with the literature of the Karaites. He possessed, however, no perfectly formed, well-grounded personality, but was full of contradictions, and endowed with a large amount of frivolities; at one time he fought against the Karaites, at another he made great concessions to them. His polemical method was merciless, and depended less upon the discovery of the truth than on making some sort of reply to an antagonist. His was a spirit of negation, and forms the completest contrast to Jehuda Halevi, with whom he is said to have been closely related. Ibn Ezra (as he is simply called) combined in his person irreconcilable contrasts. His clear vision, his sharp, analytical perception, his keen insight, which was so far advanced as almost to bring him to Pantheism, were yet compatible with a reliance upon the power of authority, which degenerated into an austere fanaticism, that led him to venture to accuse independent thinkers of heresy. His temperate mind, which examined into the origin of every visible object, did not hinder him from giving expression to mysterious doctrines, which enshrouded all things in mist. Filled with trust in his God, into whose hands he quietly resigned his lot, he gave himself up to a belief in the influence of the stars upon the life of man, from which no man could possibly withdraw himself. Thus was Ibn Ezra at the same time an inexorable critic and a slave of the letter of the Law, a logician and a mystic, a deeply religious man, and an astrologer. These contradictions are not merely to be noted in the varying periods of his life, but they

controlled the whole course of his existence. In his youth he toyed with the Muse, sang panegyrics of distinguished persons, and feasted with Moses Ibn Ezra. He was likewise acquainted with Jehuda Halevi; they often conversed with great acuteness upon philosophical problems, and it is clear that they did not agree in their methods of thinking.

Although Ibn Ezra was acquainted with the handling of the rules of the manifold artistic forms of Arabic and Neo-Hebraic poetry, he was, nevertheless, no poet. His verses are artistic, learned, uninteresting, and devoid of feeling. His synagogal poetry, composed in his advanced years, also bears the same impress of only moderate worth. The poems consist of verses expressing gratitude, wise maxims, or censorious admonitions; there is no outpouring of overflowing religious feelings which absorb the soul, and which characterise fervent prayer. In the religious poetry of Ibn Ezra there is lacking that spirit of sublime exultation of a powerfully engrossed mind expressed in inspired hymns, that exalted majesty of poetry which aspires to the highest aims and consequently attains to them, so manifest in the compositions of Ibn Gebirol and Jehuda Halevi. He was, however, unsurpassable in wit and pointed epigrams, in riddles and satire. His prose style is, moreover, exemplary, and it may even be affirmed that he created it. He abstains from over-embellishment and empty phraseology.

If, then, Ibn Ezra holds no high place in poetry, he may nevertheless rightly lay claim to the first position as an original expositor of the Holy Scriptures, in which he displayed great tact, since he was guided by the strictly grammatical sense of the text. He was, as it were, born to be an exegetist. He was able to bring to bear his widespread knowledge and ideas upon the verses of the Holy Writ without being compelled to bring them into logical connection. His restless, inconstant mind was not

capable of forming anything complete or systematical. In the same way, he had not the power of methodising Hebrew philology, and arranging it in a synoptical manner. In Biblical exegesis, on the contrary, he was thoroughly original. He raised it to the degree of a science, with fixed principles, so that he was for a long time without a rival in this department of learning. It is worthy of remark, that he never felt himself stimulated to cultivate the field of Biblical interpretation whilst at home, although he certainly possessed all the most necessary and fitting talents for this work. As long as he remained in Spain, he was only known as a clever mathematician and astronomer, not as an exegetist. He produced little evidence of his literary powers in his native land; at the most, only some Hebrew poems of a religious or satirical character.

Whilst living in Toledo, which town had become impoverished owing to the continual wars, his means of existence grew very straitened, and Ibn Ezra was obliged to look elsewhere for support, and to leave his native town. He was never possessed of much wealth. In his epigrammatic way, he made merry over his misfortunes, which condemned him to poverty: "I strive to become wealthy, but the stars are opposed to me. If I were to engage in shroud-making, I verily believe that men would cease dying; or if I adopted candle-making as a trade, the sun would never again sink to its rest even unto the hour of my death."

As he was unable to earn his livelihood at home he started on his travels (about 1138-39). His son Isaac, who was already grown up, accompanied him. He visited Africa, Egypt, and Palestine; and communed with the learned men of Tiberias, who prided themselves on the possession of carefully-written copies of the Torah. As he could find no rest in any place, he journeyed further, towards

Babylonia : paid a visit to the city of Bagdad, where a Prince of the Captivity, with the consent of the Caliph, once again exerted complete sway over certain Eastern congregations. During the course of this extensive journey, Ibn Ezra observed many things with great powers of discernment, and enriched the vast stores of his mind.

It is difficult to understand why, on his turning homewards from the East, he did not again visit his native land. In Rome, he at length found the long-desired rest (1140). His appearance in Italy marks an epoch in the development of culture among the Italian Jews. Although they enjoyed absolute freedom to such a degree that the Roman community was not bound to pay any taxes, the Jews of Italy still remained in a low condition of civilisation. They studied the Talmud in a mechanical, lifeless manner. They had no knowledge of the correct interpretation of the Scriptures; they looked upon the Neo-Hebraic style as a corruption of Hebrew used for the purpose of making wretched rhymes. Their models were the rugged rhymes of Eleazar Kalir, which they considered inimitable. Their sluggish minds were prone to all the superstition of the Middle Ages. What a contrast to them did the Spanish traveller present, with his refined taste for art, his healthy ideas, and his philosophical education! The time of his arrival in Rome was, indeed, favourable to the revival of the higher culture. Just at this time there arose a bold priest, Arnold of Brescia, who asserted that the Popes did not rule according to the spirit of the Gospel: that it was not befitting for them to hold temporal sovereignty: that, on the other hand, they should live as true servants of the Church, and act with proper humility.

An earnest spirit of inquiry, together with striving after freedom, was set on foot in the home

of Popedom. The people listened eagerly to the inspirited words of the young reformer, threw off their allegiance to the Papacy, and declared their state a Republic (1139-1143). Just at this time, Ibn Ezra entered Rome. It is most probable that the youths and men gathered around him in large numbers in order to hear the great traveller, the deeply learned Spanish scholar; who knew well how to enchant them by his terse, lively, striking, and ingenious conversation.

The first productions of Ibn Ezra, who had now reached his fiftieth year, appeared in Rome. He next wrote his exposition of the Five Megillot. His exegetical principles had already been made evident in his first works. Everything which was obscure disappeared wherever his clear vision penetrated, unless he purposely shut his eyes so that he might not see what was right, or else pretended not to see at all. Was it owing to doubts that agitated his mind that he acted thus, or from a characteristic weakness which shrank from rudely dispelling the dreams of the multitude? It cannot be gainsaid that Ibn Ezra very often denies the truth, or conceals it in such a manner that it is only recognisable by men of equal intellect.

Great, however, as were Ibn Ezra's exegetical talents, they did not enable him to comprehend and thoroughly to analyse doubtful Biblical passages so as to bring them into some sort of connection as an organic whole, or as a beautifully constructed work of art. His mind was more directed to individual detached questions, just as his restless spirit never remained concentrated on the thing itself, but always had a tendency to digress into other subjects, which were only slightly connected with the original matter. Ibn Ezra was the first to convey to the Roman Jews a conception of the importance of Hebrew grammar, of which they were completely ignorant. He trans-

lated the grammatical works of Chayuj, from the Arabic into Hebrew, and wrote an independent work under the title of "The Balance" (Moznaim), in which the beautifully composed historical introduction concerning the performances of his predecessors in the sphere of Hebrew philology is even now of interest.

In the summer of 1145, he was at Mantua, and here he composed a new grammatical work upon the purity of Hebrew style (Zachot). In this book he directed a charge of heresy against those who deviated from the Massoretic authorities. This conduct appears the more incongruous in him, as he certainly, under the mask of secrecy, always permitted himself great freedom with regard to the Bible. He remarks upon the grammatical works of Ibn Janach, that they deserve to be thrown into the furnace, because the author stated of more than a hundred words in the Bible that they ought be read or understood in another way. His condemnatory judgment was of so much avail that the important productions of Ibn Janach remained unknown to the following generations, and inquirers were compelled to quench their thirst from incompetent authorities.

He does not appear to have stayed long in Mantua, but to have betaken himself thence to Lucca, where he dwelt for several years, and gathered a circle of pupils about him. Here he occupied himself very much with the study of astronomy, drew up astronomical tables, and paid great attention also to the empirical science of astrology which was diligently studied by Mahometans and Christians. He wrote many books under different titles on this subject (1148).

After recovering from a severe illness, he determined to engage himself in the exposition of the Pentateuch, in which he made but tardy progress owing to its great difficulty. He was now in the

sixty-ninth year of his age (1152-53). But there are no signs of approaching old age to be found in the work, which bears rather the stamp of freshness and youthful vigour. The exposition of the Pentateuch by Ibn Ezra is an artistic piece of work, both in contents and in form. The language is vigorous, flowing and witty, the interpretation profoundly penetrating, temperate, and impregnated with a spirit of devotion. His rich store of knowledge, his extensive reading and experience enabled him to make the Book of books more intelligible, and to scatter asunder the misty clouds in which ignorance and prejudice had enshrouded it.

In his introduction, he characterises in a very striking and clever manner the four customary and unsuitable methods of interpretation which he desired to depose. He confidently exalted himself above his predecessors, and, carrying out the task which he had set himself, arrived at the exact literal meaning of the text. Ibn Ezra by means of his commentary to the Pentateuch became the leader of the school of temperate, careful, and scientific expositors of the Bible, and held the first place among a minority of enlightened minds, who were opposed to the obscuration of Agadic explanation, which claimed Rashi as its chief exponent. For although he denounced as heretical every interpretation that differed from the Massora, yet it was his duty, as the author of the method, to clear up all difficulties, and the charge of disbelief applied especially to him as its defender. In fact, Ibn Ezra obstinately showed that he could even be counted among such men as Chivi Albalchi, Yitzchaki, and others, who called the authority of the Pentateuch into question. In a vague and mysterious way he gave it to be understood that several verses in the Torah had been added by a later hand; or that the whole dated from a later period. It is a real problem to know whether he was in earnest in his

scepticism or in his firm belief. In Lucca, Ibn Ezra wrote his brilliant commentary to Isaiah (1154-55), and other less important works. After the completion of his commentary to the Pentateuch (1155), Ibn Ezra left Italy, and went to the south of France, which, on account of its connection with Catalonia, possessed more of the Spanish-Jewish culture than the north of France, Italy, and Germany. Provence, in Jewish history, forms the dividing line between two methods, the strictly Talmudical, and the scientific and artistic. The Jewish Provençals took an active part in both methods, but did not bring either to any degree of excellence, they merely remained admirers and imitators. Ibn Ezra introduced a new element into this sphere. In the town of Rhodéz he stayed for many years (1155-57), and wrote his commentaries to the book of Daniel, the Psalms, and the Twelve Prophets. His fame became widespread, and attracted admirers. The greatest Rabbinical authority of the time, Jacob Tam, sent a poem of homage in a metrical form, at which Ibn Ezra was so surprised, that he replied to him in a half-flattering, half-violent epigram. His love for travelling led him, now in his seventieth year, towards foggy London, where he found a liberal-minded Mæcenas, who treated him with affection. Here he composed a kind of philosophy of religion, which, however, bears marks of extreme carelessness and haste, and it is absolutely impossible to follow his train of thought. On the whole Ibn Ezra effected as little in this branch of learning as in philosophy itself.

After this work on the philosophy of religion, he wrote in London a kind of defence of the Sabbath, which is interesting on account of its introduction. He clothed the opening of the subject in the form of a dream, which he says he had at night. An apparition in the vision delivers to him a letter from the Sabbath, here personified, in which the

latter complains that a disciple of his had introduced into his house writings in which it was explained that the Biblical day began with the morning, and that consequently the Friday evening before the Saturday possessed no sanctity. The vision thereupon commanded him to take up the defence of the Sabbath. When he awoke in the night, he read, by the light of the moon, the Bible commentaries which were brought to him, and which were of a suspicious character, and, in truth, found that they affirmed that the Biblical day began not with the evening but with the morning. This unorthodox doctrine, which was also propounded by the grandson of Rashi, the pious Samuel ben Meir, aroused all the activity of Ibn Ezra; and he felt himself in duty bound to controvert it with all the weapons in his possession, "lest Israel be thereby led into error." In pious wrath he writes, "the hand of him who wrote down such a thing shall be withered, and his eyes darkened." The defence, which consists of the interpretation of Biblical verses and astronomical explanations, bears the name of "The Sabbath Epistle." Although he was in prosperous circumstances whilst in London, and had many pupils, he left that town after a short stay. In the autumn of 1160 he visited Narbonne, and later on (1165 or 1166) he was again at Rhodéz, where in his old age he revised his Commentary to the Pentateuch, abridged it, whilst retaining the most essential portions, and finally composed his last book, a grammatical work (*Safah Berurah*). The vigour and freshness of intellect which he retained even to the end of his life is wonderful; his last productions bear the same imprint of vivacity, accuracy, and youthful power as the first. Besides his exegetical, grammatical, astronomical, and astrological writings, he was also the author of several works on Mathematics. It appears that in his closing years Ibn

Ezra had already set out for this purpose from Southern France. When, however, he had reached Calahorra, on the borders of Navarre and Aragon, he died, and it is said that on his deathbed he wittily applied a verse from the Bible to himself, which says, "Abraham was 78 years old when he escaped from the curse of this world." He died Monday, 1st Adar (22nd January), 1167. He left many pupils and a talented son, who however did not add much glory to his name.

The Jewish community in France also possessed at this time, a highly-gifted man, who not only concentrated within himself the chief characteristics of the French school, and thus became the lawgiver for several centuries, but who also partook of the spirit which animated the Jewish-Spanish school. Jacob Tam of Rameru (born about 1100, died 1171) was the most distinguished product of the School of Rashi. Being the youngest of the three learned grandchildren of the great teacher of Troyes, Tam was unable to acquire anything from his grandfather, whom he only knew when a child. He attained, however, to such a degree of excellence in the study of the Talmud that he outshone his contemporaries, and even his elder brothers, Isaac and Samuel (Rashbam). The far-stretching paths and the twisted ways of the Talmudical labyrinth were quite open to him, and he had command over the whole region with rare mastery. He united clearness of intellect with acuteness in reasoning, and was the chief founder of the school of the Tosafists. None of his predecessors had revealed such profoundness of knowledge and so marvellous a dialectical ingenuity in the sphere of the Talmud. Although living as a private person and engaged in business he was still esteemed the most famous Rabbi of his time, and his renown travelled as far as Spain and Italy. Questions upon difficult points were exclusively sent to him, not only from his own

land, but also from Southern France and Germany; and the Rabbinical authorities of the period, and even those of Paris, bowed to him with the deepest reverence. Already in his youth he was surrounded by numbers of pupils who regarded him with veneration as their ideal. He was so overwhelmed with the task of giving answers to questions sent to him that he was sometimes tempted to put aside the burden. The fanatics of the Second Crusade who almost deprived him of life robbed him of all his possessions, and left him nothing more than his bare life and his library. Nevertheless, he composed his Commentary to the Talmud just at this troubled period. He was a man of a thoroughly firm religious and moral character, in which there was only one blemish, viz., that he took usury from Christians, for which purpose he in part set aside the stringent laws of the Talmud against this practice.

Jacob Tam is almost the only member of the North-French school who overcame the partiality for Talmudical study, and displayed a liking and a great taste for the totally different studies of the Spanish Jews. He imitated their manipulation of Hebrew metres, and wrote liturgical prayers and secular poems in a metrical form. He had intercourse with Ibn Ezra, the representative of Jewish-Spanish culture, and, as related above, exchanged poems with him. Poetry led Tam, who did nothing superficially, to a thorough course of inquiry into the Hebrew language; and he became so far advanced in the knowledge of grammar that he was able to act as arbiter in the grammatical controversy between Menachem ben Saruk and his opponent Dunash.

The large numbers of learned Rabbis in Northern France and Germany, and the universally acknowledged authority of Tam, brought about a new departure which now for the first time made its

appearance in post-Talmudical times. Under the presidentship of the Master of Rameru, the first Rabbinical Synod assembled for the purpose of deciding, in common, upon certain important resolutions which were necessary at the time. Probably the Councils which had been convoked in France by the fugitive Popes, Pascal, Innocent II., Calixtus, and Alexander III., gave this impulse to the Rabbis. The Rabbinical Synods were certainly not attended with that pomp which transforms such assemblies into theatres in which vanity and ambition are fostered. Those who took part in the proceedings came together in some appointed place of meeting which was frequented by many Jews in Troyes and Rheims, without any splendour or ceremony, and were entirely free from base motives or political intrigues. The decisions of the Rabbinical Synods were concerned not only with religious and communal matters, but touched also upon civil laws, as the Jews still possessed their own jurisdiction.

It is in the highest degree probable that it was from one of these Synods of the Rabbis, in whose minds the recollection of the persecution of the Second Crusade was still fresh, that the prohibition was issued against any Jew purchasing a crucifix, Church appurtenances, vestments of the Mass, Church ornaments and missals, because such an act might involve the whole community of the Jews in great danger. At a numerously attended Synod, in which a hundred and fifty Rabbis took part, from Troyes, Auxerre, Rheims, Paris, Sens, Drome, Lyon, Carpentras, from Normandy, Aquitania, Anjou, Poitou, and Lorraine, and at whose head at first were the brothers Samuel and Tam, and afterwards Menachem ben Perez from Joigny, Eleazer ben Nathan of Mayence, and Eleazer ben Samson of Cologne, the following resolutions were passed:—(1.) That no Jew should summon his co-

religionist before the Courts of the country unless both parties were agreeable to it, or if the guilty party refused to appear before a Jewish Court of Law. (2.) That all damages which might accrue to one of the parties through this partial litigation at a non-Jewish Court of Law should be restored by the complainant according to the estimation of seven elders of the congregation. (3.) That no person should apply for the office of president or provost to a secular authority, or obtain the post by stealth, but that the election of a president for the burden of religious and communal responsibilities should be carried on in an open manner in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the members of the congregation. A ban of excommunication was pronounced against all who transgressed against these and other decisions of the Synod, which enacted that no Jew should hold intercourse with such transgressors, partake of their food, use their books or utensils, or accept charity at any time from them. The edict of excommunication against informers and traitors was also revived at this Synod.

At a Synod held in Troyes, at which Tam again officiated, excommunication was threatened to all such who dared to find any flaws in any bill of divorce after it had already been delivered to a wife. Wicked or malevolent men sometimes omitted one detail or another in a bill of divorce, and thus contrived to make it faulty and suspicious. Other decisions were settled by the assembly at the Synods, and these possessed the force of law among the French and German Jews. Thus, among others, it was decided that the ordinance of Gershom for the limitation of polygamy could only be abrogated by a hundred Rabbis from three different provinces, such as Francia, Normandy and Anjou, and only from the most weighty motives. The Rabbis used this power of the Synod not like the Catholic

prelates against the people, but in accordance with the feeling of the nation and for the welfare of the community. Thus it happened that there was no necessity for their decisions to be frequently renewed, as in the case of the Councils.

In his old age Tam lived to witness a bloody persecution of the Jews in his vicinity, in Blois, which is not so memorable on account of the severity with which the martyrs were treated, as of the lying accusation, then for the first time fiercely levelled against them, that the Jews at Easter used the blood of Christians. It was a base intrigue which kindled the fire at the stake for the innocent.

In Blois, where about forty Jews dwelt, it happened that a Jewish man was riding in the dusk towards the Loire in order to give his horse a bath. He there met a Christian groom, whose horse, at the appearance of a white fleece which the Jew wore beneath his cloak, grew restive, pranced, and could not be brought to the water. The servant who was well aware of the Jew-hating character of his master, the Mayor of the town, concocted a story from this incident which served as ground for an accusation. He asserted that he had beheld the Jewish horseman throwing a murdered Christian child into the water. The Mayor bore a hatred against an exceedingly wealthy Jewish woman named Pulcelina, who was a favourite of his lord, the Duke Theobald of Chartres, and took this opportunity of revenging himself on his enemy. He repeated the lie about the murder of a Christian child, and the charge was thus formulated; "the Jews had crucified it for the Festival of Passover and then thrown it into the Loire." Duke Theobald thereupon commanded that all the Jews should be put in chains and thrown into prison. Pulcelina alone, for whom Theobald entertained a particular affection, remained unharmed.

Relying upon this she quieted the fears of her suffering co-religionists with the assurance that she would prevail on the Duke to act kindly towards them, and bring help to them. But soon the imprisoned Jews experienced the fact that nothing human can be implicitly relied upon.

Pulcelina, on account of the affection shown for her, had incurred the bitter enmity of Isabelle, the wife of the Duke, and she compassed the destruction of the Jews. She had a watch set over Pulcelina, and prevented her from having any access to the Duke. The Jews had but one glimmer of hope in the well-known avarice of the Duke. He had deputed a Jew of Chartres to ask them what sum they were willing to pay in order to be released from this charge of murder. Thereupon they consulted with the Christians who befriended them, and it was arranged that one hundred pounds of ready money, and one hundred and eighty pounds of outstanding debts—probably the whole wealth of the small community—would be quite sufficient. At this point, however, a priest took part in the proceedings, and addressing the Duke with warmth, told him that he should not treat the matter lightly, but should punish the Jews severely in case the accusation against them was well founded. But how could anyone ascertain the truth, seeing that the whole charge rested merely upon the statement of the groom, who probably might have seen a body being thrown into the river? In the Middle Ages such doubtful cases were peculiarly treated. The water-test was applied. The servant was conveyed to the river in a vessel filled with water, and as he did not sink, the Duke and the whole of the Christian population were firmly convinced that his statements were really true. Duke Theobald issued the order that the entire Jewish congregation at Blois should suffer death by fire. When they were brought out to a wooden tower, and the faggots

around them were about to be set alight, the priest offered them the chance of acknowledging Christianity, and thus preserving their lives. They nevertheless remained steadfast to their faith, and were first tortured and then dragged to the stake. Thirty-four men and seventeen women died amid the flames whilst chanting the prayer which contains the confession of the existence of the One God (Wednesday, 20 Sivan, 26 May, 1171), Pulcelina also suffering death. A few Jews only, from fear of death, accepted Christianity. The Christians, however, relying on the water-test, were firmly convinced that the Jews had rightly deserved death at the stake, and the chronicle narrates in terse fashion: "Theobald, Duke of Chartres, caused several Jews of Blois to be burnt, because they had crucified a Christian child for the celebration of their Passover, and then threw it in a sack into the Loire."

When the news of the martyrdom of the Jews reached Tam, he decreed that the day should be observed as a strict fast and day of mourning. The congregations of France, Anjou, and the Rhine country, at this intimation of the great teacher, which was conveyed by letter, willingly accepted his commands. This fast-day, in memory of the martyrs of Blois is at the same time connected with the first outbreak of the utterly false and groundless fabrication that the Jews use blood on their Passover, which in the course of half a century was the cause of the death of hecatombs of victims. This was the last public act of Tam, for a few days afterwards he died (Wednesday, 4th Tamuz, 9th June). One of his pupils, Chayim Cohen, remarked that were he at the burial, in spite of the law that a descendant of Aaron may not touch a corpse, he would have taken part in it, since for such a holy man the sanctity of a priest might be laid aside. With him concludes the series of

creative minds of the French school, just as Ibn Ezra marks the end of the original element in the Spanish school. There now arose a personage who reconciled both methods in the fullest degree, Maimuni (Maimonides), with whom a clearly marked transformation in Jewish history is commenced.

CHAPTER XII.

SURVEY OF THE EPOCH OF MAIMUNI (MAIMONIDES).

The Jews of Toledo—Ibn-Shoshan, Ibn-Alfachar—The Poet Charisi—Sheshet Benveniste—Benjamin of Tudela—The Jews of Provence—The Kimchis—The Communities of Beziers, Montpellier, Lunel, and Marseilles—Persecutions of Jews in North France—The Jews of England—Richard I.—The Jews of York—The Jews of Germany—Judah the Pious of Ratisbon—Petachya the Traveller—The Jews of Italy and of the Byzantine Empire—Communities in Syria and Palestine—The Jews of Bagdad—Mosul—The Pseudo-Messiah, David Alroy—The Jews of India—Conversion to Judaism of Tartars—The Jews of Egypt.

1171—1205 C.E.

BEFORE the thick clouds of deadly hatred had begun to gather from all sides against the house of Jacob, darkening his horizon without leaving even one span of the blue heaven; before the elements, pregnant with destruction, had been let loose on the head of the community of Israel, crushing it to the earth; before evil motives, used in the name of the Deity, instigated princes and nations, freemen and slaves, great and small, against the weak sons of Judah, and urging men against them with all the weapons of murder, and the stings of scorn, endeavoured to destroy this small body of men; before the haughty Popes, seated on the throne of God as judges over the living and dead, fastened a badge of scorn upon the garments of Jewish men and women, and exposed them to persecution and mockery from all who encountered them; before foul doctrines were prepared as instruments of torture for the most innocent of men, to whom

crimes were falsely attributed of a nature at which the accused shuddered more than the accusers, and which were mere pretexts for torture and ill-treatment; before the gross falsehood that Jews murdered children, poisoned wells, and employed witchcraft, became generally accepted; before all the nations of Christian Europe excelled the savage Mongolians in barbarity towards the Jews; before the thousandfold sufferings drove the blood from their hearts, the marrow from their bones, and the spirit from their brains, making them weaklings, and dragging down their aspirations for heaven to grovel upon the earth; in short, before that life of hell began for the Jews, which, in the days of Pope Innocent III., reached its highest point under Ferdinand the Catholic of Spain, it is worth while to take a glance around upon the then-known circle of scattered Jewish congregations on the face of the globe, and to take note of their condition in different countries, in order to see what they still possessed, and of what this devilish fanaticism afterwards robbed them. The cruelty, which, in the names of two religions, was preached against the Jews, had hitherto not succeeded in stamping them altogether as outcasts. In one place they were despised and hated fiercely as an execrable people, whilst in another they were yet looked upon with respect as worthy citizens and men. Whilst in one country they were already serfs of the Imperial chamber, in another they were appointed by princes and cities to important offices; in one place they were reduced to the miserable position of bondsmen, and in another they still wielded the sword and fought on behalf of their independence.

The numbers of Jews in Asia far exceeded those of Europe, but the general standard of the latter made them superior, so that Europe must be regarded as the chief seat of Judaism. Here true self-consciousness was aroused; here Jewish

thinkers strove to unriddle the difficult problem which Judaism set forth whilst amidst the other religions and peoples, and which afforded opportunities to certain individuals to pursue their investigations on the subject. The heart of Judaism still dwelt in the Pyrenean Peninsula. Jewish Spain still held the highest rank, as the intellect had here reached its fullest development. Jews lived in all the five Christian kingdoms, which had been formed in this prosperous peninsula, and which was politically divided into the kingdoms of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Portugal, and Navarre. In Southern Spain, in Mahometan Andalusia, alone, since its conquest by the intolerant Almohades, there were no Jews, at least, none who openly professed their religion. The former seats of Jewish learning, Cordova, Seville, Grenada, and Lucena had been devastated; Toledo, the capital of Castile and of the whole country, had taken their place. The Toledo congregation at this time led the van in everything; it numbered more than twelve thousand souls. As the town was resplendent with magnificent buildings, it possessed also many splendidly erected synagogues, "with whose beauty none other could compare." There were among the Jews of Toledo many men who were not only wealthy and cultured, but also brave men who were well skilled in the use of weapons. Jewish youths spent their time in practising the art of war, that they might become distinguished knights. Under Alfonso VIII., called the Noble (1166-1214), many talented Jews obtained high positions, were appointed officers of the State, and on their side worked for the greatness of their beloved fatherland. Joseph ben Solomon Ibn Shoshan, called "the Prince," was a distinguished personage at the Court of Alfonso. (He was born about 1135, died 1204-5.) Learned, pious, wealthy, and charitable, Ibn Shoshan enjoyed the favour of the king, and was probably

active in affairs of State. "Favour was bestowed upon him, and goodwill manifested towards him by the king and the grandees." With his usual liberality, he encouraged the study of the Talmud, and erected, in princely magnificence, a new synagogue in Toledo. His son Solomon equalled him in many virtues.

Another highly honoured man at Alfonso's Court was Abraham Ibn Alfachar (b. about 1160, d. after 1223), "who was crowned with noble qualities and magnanimous deeds. He was exalted in word and deed, an ornament to the king, and of renown to the princes." Thoroughly proficient in the Arabic language, Ibn Alfachar wrote choice prose, and composed well-sounding verse, whose high merit induced an Arab author to make a collection of them; amongst them was a panegyric upon King Alfonso. This noble king once despatched Ibn Alfachar upon an embassy to the Court of Morocco, where ruled the Prince of the Faithful, Abu Jacob Yussuff Almostansir. Although this prince of the Almohades continued the intolerant policy of his predecessors, and did not permit any Jew to dwell in his kingdom, and even desired to distinguish the Jews who had embraced Islam from the native Mahometans in a prescribed and odious manner, he was still obliged to receive the Jewish ambassador of Alfonso with friendliness. When Ibn Alfachar presented himself for an audience before the vizir of Almostansir, in order to show his letters of credence, he was conducted through the charming gardens of the palace, the splendour and fragrancy of which delighted the senses. The gardener was, however, as detestable as the gardens were beautiful. To the inquiry of the vizir, how the garden pleased him, Ibn Alfachar replied, "I would positively have thought it to be Paradise, were it not that I know that Paradise is guarded by a beautiful angel (Redvan), whilst this has a hateful

demon (Malek), who dwells near the gates of hell, as its guardian." The vizir laughed at this witty comparison, and thought it worthy of being imparted to Almostansir. The latter remarked to the Jewish ambassador, "The hateful door-keeper was intentionally chosen, in order to facilitate the entrance of a Jew into this Paradise, because a Redvan would certainly never have admitted an infidel."

A kinsman of this favourite of Alfonso, named Juda ben Joseph Ibn Alfachar, also bore the title of "Prince."

Although the two patrons of Toledo at this period, Ibn Shoshan and Ibn Alfachar, were themselves proficient in the Talmud, and supported Talmudical learning, yet this study did not flourish in the Spanish capital to the same degree as with Alfassi, with his disciples and the School of Rashi. Toledo produced no single Talmudist of high standing. The congregation was compelled for several centuries to procure its Rabbis from without. The Toledans had a greater inclination for science and poetry. They busied themselves more with philosophy, meditated deeply upon religion, and defended their belief against doubt. They were the most enlightened of the Spanish Jews.

The old historian and writer on religious philosophy, Abraham Ibn Daud, was still alive, and was an ornament to the congregation of Toledo. At length in the year 1180 he fell a martyr in a riot against the Jews, the origin and extent of which are not quite ascertained. It is possible that the very warm friendship displayed by King Alfonso towards the Jews had aroused alarm against them. This prince, who had married an English princess, had an open liaison with a beautiful Jewish maiden, Rachel, who on account of her beauty was called Formosa. This intimacy was not of a

temporary nature, but lasted for seven years. Concerning this love, a poet sang :

“The king forgot his own wife
And spent his time in her company.
So deeply did his majesty love her
That for her he forgot both kingdom and people.”

Suddenly, a band of conspirators attacked the fair Jewess in her richly decorated apartments, and, in the presence of the king, slew both her and her companions, probably at the instigation of the queen and the clergy. On this occasion, a riot may have broken forth against the Jews, in which Abraham Ibn Daud met his death.

This did not prevent the Jews of Toledo, however, from giving great assistance to Alfonso in his wars against the Moors. When he assembled his immense army in order to subdue the great power of the Almohades, who under Jacob Alman-sur were again trying to penetrate into the heart of Spain, the Jews poured forth their riches into the coffers of the impoverished monarch so as to enable him to equip his forces. The battle of Alarcos (19th July, 1195) terminated in a defeat for him, and the flower of Christian chivalry lay upon the battlefield. The Almohades ravaged fair Castile far and wide, and Alfonso was compelled to shut himself up in his capital, where the Jews fought in emulation of the other inhabitants, in order to repel the onslaughts of the enemy. They materially assisted in the forced retreat of the foe. The Jews of Castile had a special interest in opposing the Almohades in their attempts to gain possession of the capital, lest they should become subjected to the fanaticism of Islam. They witnessed with joy the withdrawal of the Almohades, which was caused by the kings of Castile and Aragon, who had entered into a confederacy to harass the army of the Almohades. Through this union, however, the Jews of the kingdom of Leon suffered severely,

when the allied forces, ravaging the land, marched through their territory. In this campaign, the oldest Hebrew copy of the Bible in Spain, called Hillali, which had hitherto served as a model for copyists (and is said to have been written about the year 600) fell into the hands of the enemy (9 Ab, 1197).

In Aragon, to which Catalonia was attached from the time of Ramon Berengua IV., the Jews lived under favourable circumstances, and were able to develop the activity of their minds. Alfonso II. (1162—1196), a promoter and patron of the Provençal poetry, favoured men who were famed for word and thought, and amongst these the Jews at this time took a foremost place. Although Saragossa was the capital of Aragon, and of old had a Jewish congregation, yet at this time the city of Barcelona was considered the centre of Northern Spain, owing to its favourable position by the sea, and the flourishing state of its commerce. Barcelona was pompously termed by the poet Charisi, “the congregation of princes and nobles.” At its head stood Sheshet Benveniste, who had a liking for philosophy, and was physician, diplomatist, Talmudist, and poet (b. 1131, d. about 1210). Well acquainted with the Arabic language, he was employed by the King of Aragon on diplomatic service, obtained honours and wealth, and expressed his gratitude for this prosperous state of existence, just like Samuel Ibn Nagrela, with his pen. Like this Jewish prince, Sheshet Benveniste supported men of science, and students of the Talmud. The poets laud his noble mind and his liberality in excessive terms. Sheshet Benveniste himself, when in his seventy-second year, composed a long song of praise of one hundred and forty-two verses in honour of Joseph Ibn Shoshan of Toledo.

Next to him in importance in Barcelona stood Samuel ben Abraham Ibn Chasdaï Halevi (flourished

1165—1216), “the fountain of wisdom and the sea of thought,” as the poet Charisi exaggeratedly calls him. He had five learned sons, among whom was Abraham Ibn Chasdaï, who was the poet of a moral romance, “The Prince and the Dervish,” and as a translator of philosophical writings has made a name in the history of literature.

The community of Tudela, a small town on the Ebro, which was the apple of contention between the Kings of Aragon and Navarre, had on two occasions courageously fought for equal privileges with the Christian and Mahometan inhabitants, and possessed a castle of their own for their security. It produced a learned traveller, Benjamin ben Jonah of Tudela, to whom, not alone Jewish history, but also the general history of nations owes thanks for his interesting and authentic information. He travelled through a great portion of Southern Europe, Asia and Africa (1165—1173). The object of this journey is not quite known. He was either an itinerant merchant, or a pious man of an inquiring turn of mind in search of traces of a Messianic redemption. He made observations on the peculiarities of each town he visited. In Gerona there was a small Jewish community whose members were devoted to the study of the Talmud.

Here Serachya Halevi Gerundi was born (in 1125, died 1186). He appears to have possessed a certain amount of knowledge of philosophy, and was probably one of the first in his country to occupy himself with this subject. He chiefly studied the Talmud, and being acquainted with the labours of the French and Spanish schools, he combined in himself the studies of Alfassi and Rashi, Joseph Ibn Migash, and Tam. He was a thoroughly critical and deductive scholar, his mind being at the same time analytic and synthetic in its tendency. In his youth, at the age

of nineteen, he composed Talmudical works, and wrote commentaries on those of Alfassi. Serachya Gerundi appears to have suffered persecution from the community of Gerona, for which he avenged himself by a satire which he composed on them. In Lunel, where he possessed many friends, and where he was maintained by a patron of learning, he composed various writings against a Talmudical authority of the South of France—Abraham ben David; and here also, at an advanced age, he compiled his acute commentaries on Alfassi's work on the greater part of the Talmud. These he published under the name of Maor. In this critical work Serachya displayed his independence of spirit, and showed throughout his comprehension of the Talmud. But this very independence was displeasing to his contemporaries, who were accustomed to hedge themselves in by the decisions of the old authorities. Serachya was far in advance of his age in the manner in which he regarded the Talmud, and accordingly his conclusions were strenuously opposed. Of his life and opinions nothing further is known.

In the district on the other side of the Pyrenees, in Languedoc or in Provence, the Jews towards the end of the twelfth century lived in the most satisfactory condition. South France partook of the North Spanish character in respect of culture and morals. The country was divided into a large number of small States, a circumstance which brought out the versatility of its genius, and produced a period of literary excellence which has never been surpassed. The province belonged at first partly to the French crown and partly to the German empire; then to the King of Aragon as Count of Provence, and later to the Count of Toulouse and St. Gilles; and, lastly, to different vassals, counts, viscounts, and barons.

These were nearly all actuated by broader views

of life; they were able to appreciate the flourishing Provençal poetry, they encouraged learning, and were not bigoted adherents of the Church. Besides the nobility, a free and wealthy middle class had arisen, which preserved its independence as its dearest treasure. The intimate relations of the inhabitants to the Moslems and the Jews had weakened the Western prejudices against the Orientals. The breadth of mind of the Provençals, which moved them to resist the Catholic church, to disregard papal bulls, to condemn the arrogant clergy, to apply the scourge to the vices of the Roman court, and which gave rise to the sect of the Albigenses, also rendered them capable of appreciating Judaism, and the adherents of that religion. Among the Provençal freethinkers, whom the stern unbending Catholic church branded as heretics, there were many who both secretly and openly acknowledged that the law of the Jews was better than that of the Christians. Many great and minor lords of South France appointed without prejudice Jewish officers, and entrusted them with the high office of Chief Bailiff (Bailli), with which, in the absence of the barons, were united the police and judicial powers. The Jews of this country, which was so highly blessed by Nature, felt themselves also favoured, carried their heads high, took the most lively interest in the welfare of the country, and exerted themselves in spiritual concerns with untiring zeal. As the Christians ever showed themselves ready to adopt innovations, so the Jews of South France were not satisfied to accept all tradition with unquestioning faith, but sought to comprehend its import, and prove it before the judgment-seat of reason. However great the interest which the Jews of Provence manifested for science, they cannot be considered as independent thinkers, striking out a new line of thought peculiar to the spirit of Judaism and unaffected by

outside influence. Jewish Provence did not produce one single personality who brought to light an original creation in any sphere, not one profound thinker, not one genuine poet, not one epoch-making personality in any branch of thought. The Jewish Provençals were faithful disciples of foreign masters, whose conclusions they appropriated, and steadfastly maintained; they were subordinate workers in science, translators, and propagators of foreign intellectual productions. Judaism they loved with all their hearts, although ready to pursue the free investigation of truth. Jewish virtues were in the highest degree domestic, their houses were hospitably opened to all strangers. They assisted the needy privately, and practised beneficence at all times. The rich helped the children of poor parents to receive higher instruction, and gave them books, which were at that time very valuable. What, however, is still more to be set in prominence is that the congregations stood loyally by one another, and interested themselves in each others' most intimate concerns. If danger ever threatened any particular congregation, the others immediately took measures to assist and to avert the impending danger. Their general prosperity was attained partly by agriculture and partly by commerce, which at that time was carried on with Spain, Italy, England, Egypt, and the East, and was in its most flourishing condition.

The principal community of South France was Narbonne; it contained at that time 300 members. At their head stood, under the government of the sensible and masculine Princess Ermengarde, Kalonymos ben Todros, of an old family, whose ancestor, Machir, had immigrated in the time of Charlemagne. Kalonymos possessed many landed estates, which were granted to him by brief in such a manner that they could not be taken away from him. At the head of the old college was Abraham

ben Isaac, who was recognised as an authority with the title of Chief Justice (Ab-beth-din, died, autumn, 1172.) He was a man of severe Talmudical disposition, who had scarcely been affected by the general culture. His Talmudical learning, moreover, was more wide than deep; his disciples, Serachya and Abraham ben David, surpassed him in this respect even in his lifetime. In Narbonne there lived about this time the Kimchi family, whose achievements cannot be said to correspond with their fame, but who directly for Narbonne and indirectly for posterity effected more than the greatest masters. The founder of the family, Joseph ben Isaac Kimchi (flourished 1150-70), had immigrated from South Spain to Narbonne, probably on account of the religious persecution of the Almohades. Having a knowledge of Arabic he translated Bachya's moral-philosophical work, and many others in pure, fluent Hebrew, composed a Hebrew grammar, wrote a commentary on the Holy Writ, the nature of the extant fragments of which precludes regret for the loss of the whole, and finally, he penned many liturgical poems, which outwardly fulfil all the conditions of the artistic form of new Hebrew poetry, then brought to perfection in Spain, but which have but little poetic value. Joseph Kimchi's merit consists solely in the fact that he introduced the Jewish culture of Spain into South France, and completed lastingly the results of Ibn Ezra's fugitive activity. A polemical work against Christianity, which represents a dialogue between a believer and an apostate, is also ascribed to him. Whether this work be genuine or not, in any case it belongs to this time and country, and throws a favourable light on the state of morality among the Jews as contrasted with that of the Christian population. The believer maintains that the true religion of the Jews is attested by the morality of its professors. The Ten Command-

ments, at least, they observe with the utmost conscientiousness. Not only do they adore no other being but God, but they avoid taking false oaths. Among them are no murderers, adulterers, nor robbers; whilst Christian highwaymen not rarely rob the weak, hang or blind them. Jewish children are brought up in purity and fear of God, no low word is allowed to escape them. Jewish girls sit modestly at home, while Christians are careless of their self-respect. A Jew observes brotherly hospitality towards his neighbours, ransoms prisoners, clothes the naked, and feeds the hungry. All these virtues of the Jews the Christian antagonist admits as generally known, and only blames the Jews for taking high interest from the Christians. This reproach the Jewish speaker mitigates by pointing out that Christians also pursue usury even with co-religionists, whilst wealthy Jews lend to the members of their race without interest. Joseph's two sons, Moses and David Kimchi, followed in the footsteps of their father. The first, who flourished 1170—90, was still more mediocre than his father; and this character of insignificance is borne out by his grammatical and exegetical works. The younger brother, David Kimchi (born 1160, died about 1235), was, in truth, the teacher of the Hebrew language to the Jews and Christians of Europe; but if we set any value on his grammatical, lexicographical and exegetical works, we must ignore the fact that Ibn Janach, Moses Ibn Jikattella and Ibn Ezra lived before him—and with these he cannot bear comparison. David Kimchi, generally speaking, did not set up one original point of view. In the introduction to his grammatical work (*Michlol*) he is honest enough to confess that he only sought to arrange the manifold and detailed results of his predecessors more compendiously. It can, at most be recounted in his favour, that he discovered the difference between

the long and short vowels, and thereby threw light on our knowledge of the vowel changes, and, finally, that he preserved in Jewish criticism a faint recollection of a simple, sober literal exegesis in opposition to the extravagant Agadic pseudo-philosophical method of exposition.

The old community of Beziers, which had received Ibn Ezra so honourably, was at this time in a still more fortunate condition than that of Narbonne, under Viscount Raymond Trencaval and his son Roger. The Jews and Christians of this city did homage to an open-minded prince. Many of the citizens were Albigenses, and renounced their allegiance to the Pope and the Catholic church. Nevertheless, the old custom still continued for the Bishop, on Palm Sunday, to incite the parishioners against the Jews as murderers of God, when the people, armed with stones, attacked the Jewish houses. But as the Jews who lived together in one quarter, which was surrounded by walls, always took precautions to defend themselves, the consequence was that each year street-fights occurred, which were attended by considerable bodily injury. The chiefs of the community now agitated to have this custom, more discreditable to Christianity than to Judaism, put an end to, and gained over the Viscount to their side; William also, the bishop at that time, who was ashamed of so brutal a practice, agreed that it should not be allowed to continue. On May 2nd, 1160, a treaty was concluded that every priest who should stir up the people against the Jews should be excommunicated. The Jews in return pledged themselves to pay four pounds of silver every year on Palm Sunday. The sudden assassination of Raymond Trencaval by several conspirators in church on Sunday (5th Oct., 1167), involved the Jews of Beziers in trouble, probably on account of their known attachment to the Viscount. Certain

citizens preferred accusations against them, and the presidents of the congregation were arrested. Not long after, a terrible retribution overtook the murderers of the Viscount and the accusers of the Jews. Roger procured auxiliary troops from Alfonso, King of Aragon. These troops suddenly fell upon the citizens, put the men to death, hanged those most incriminated on the gallows, and Roger spared only the Jews on account of their faithful adherence to his father, together with the women and children (Feb. 1170). The Viscount Roger, who favoured the Albigenses, had also Jewish sheriffs, Moses de Cavarite and Nathan. Through this partiality towards the heretics and Jews, he provoked the anger of the clergy and the Pope, and suffered in consequence a tragic end.

A considerable Provençal community existed in the flourishing commercial city Montpellier, which was the capital of South France; it had very rich members whose beneficence is much extolled. Like their co-religionists in Beziers, they had a predilection for learning which the medical academy of the town and the prevailing freedom of education greatly promoted. The rulers of this city were by no means so friendly to the Jews as their neighbours of Beziers. William VIII. and his son, expressly enjoined in their wills that no Jew should be admitted to the office of Sheriff (1178—1201), although the latter owed a Jew, Bonet, a large sum of money. It is not known who was then at the head of the community of Montpellier, which produced not one man of any celebrity, although it possessed learned Talmudists in such plentiful abundance, that people compared its Rabbinical school with the Synhedrion of the Temple-Mount (Har).

The now diminutive town, Lünel, not far from Montpellier, was, under the lords De-Gaucelin, an important town at that time, and the Jewish congregation consisting of nearly three hundred members,

was reckoned after that of Narbonne, as holding the foremost place in Jewish Provence. Their Talmudical school, which ran a race of rivalry with that in Narbonne, educated numerous foreign students, who if they were needy were provided with all necessaries by the congregation. At the head of the congregation stood a man who was praised to an extraordinary degree by his contemporaries, Meshullam ben Jacob (died 1170), a Talmudical scholar and wealthy man, whose opinion was held as decisive in all matters of learning and law. To win his approval was an incentive to an author. "His soul adhered to the religion of his God; His wisdom was his inheritance. He illumined our darkness and showed us the right path." Thus, and still more extravagantly, does an independent contemporary describe him. Meshullam encouraged learned men of different branches to turn their attention to various occupations, particularly to translating Arabic works of Jewish authors into Hebrew. Above all, he was the first who awakened among the Jews of Provence a taste for learning. He occupied the same influential position in South France that Chasdai Ibn-Shaprut had occupied in South Spain. Meshullam had five learned sons, who marked in a small compass the two tendencies which were to meet in the next generation in keen conflict. One of the sons, Aaron, who flourished 1170—1210, although conversant with the Talmud, had a special predilection for viewing Judaism on its philosophical side; two others, Jacob and Asher, on the other hand, paid homage to that teaching which abhorred the light of reason. Jacob, although rich, led an ascetic life, drank no wine, and received on that account the name of Nazirite. He is described as the first promoter of the new Kabbala. His brother, Asher of Lunel, lived, if possible, an even austerer life; although equally affluent, he fasted much and ate no meat.

On the whole, the scientific tendency prevailed in the community of Lünel. It was represented by two men, who have made themselves famous in the history of Jewish literature, viz., the founder of the family of Tibbon, and Jonathan of Lünel. The latter was an important Talmudical authority, who wrote a commentary on Alfassi's Talmudical works. He was none the less fond of science, and was one of the first who insisted that it should take a high place in Jewish studies. Judah ben Saul Ibn-Tibbon (born about 1120, died about 1190) originally came from Granada, and had emigrated to South France on account of the persecution of the Jews by the Almohades. In Lünel he pursued the profession of physician, and in that capacity made himself so popular, that his services were sought by princes, knights, and bishops, and he was even sent for from across the sea. He knew Arabic thoroughly, and he studied Hebrew with enthusiasm. His learning, however, made him a pedant, he measured carefully every step, and cogitated deeply whether he should take it or abandon it. He perused at regular intervals his important collection of books, which he kept in most symmetrical order, and was unhappy if he noticed any confusion in them. He set great value upon elegant handwriting, and other unessential matters. Ibn Tibbon was thus, as it were, created for translating. At the instigation of Meshullam of Lünel—with whom he lived on friendly terms, as with Serachya of Gerona and Abraham ben David—and of other friends, he translated in succession from Arabic into Hebrew, Bachya's "Duties of the Heart," Ibn Gebirol's "Ethics" and "Pearl-strings," Jehuda Halevi's religious philosophical work, Ibn-Janach's important grammatical and lexicographical work, and, lastly, Saadiah's "Religious Philosophy" (1161—1186). His translations, however, show his

pedantic character; they are absolutely literal but clumsy; they slavishly follow the Arabic original, and inflict the most crying violence on the Hebrew language. Jehuda Ibn-Tibbon who knew perfectly well the duties of a conscientious translator, must have understood the two languages, and the contents of the works. As an excuse for the stiffness of his method of translation, he pleaded the poverty of the Hebrew language.

The second Tibbonide, Samuel son of Judah (born about 1160—died about 1239), was the counterpart of the character of his father, more gifted than the latter, but inconsiderate, prodigal, and of phlegmatic nonchalance. His father had spent the utmost care on his education, instructed him himself, and put him under highly-salaried masters. Thus Samuel Ibn-Tibbon learned the profession of medicine, the Arabic language, the Talmud, and the other departments of knowledge belonging thereto. His fond father also provided him at an early age with a wife, and generally tried to subject his son to his guardianship and force his own pedantic nature upon him. The latter revolted against his father's despotic rule, cast his exhortations and teachings to the winds, asserted his independence, estranged himself from his father, made foolhardy speculations instead of applying himself to his profession as doctor, lost his money, and had to appeal to his father for means to keep himself and family from starvation. At the time when the father thought that, to some extent, his career was ruined, Samuel quietly finished his education. Ultimately he excelled his father both in power of translating and in philosophical grasp. He rendered into Hebrew not only works of Jewish authors, but also some of Aristotle's composition, wrote a philosophical exposition of Ecclesiastes, and a treatise on a chapter of Genesis. Generally speaking, the chief claim of the Tibbonides to

distinction rests on their skill as translators, as that of the Kimchis on their grammatical acumen.

Not far from Lünel, in Posquières, there existed at that time a congregation of forty members. Here one of the greatest Talmudists was born, Abraham ben David (about 1125, died 1198), son-in-law of Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne. Having been educated under excellent teachers, and being very rich, Abraham (Rabed II.) supported a college of his own, which attracted many students from far and near. He provided not only for the Talmudical education of his disciples, but also for their material requirements. Whilst still in his youth, he composed Talmudical works of deep importance, and wrote, among other works, a commentary on a part of the Mishna, being persuaded thereto by Meshullam ben David. By nature inconsiderate, and having little respect for the rules of courtesy, he treats those whose writings he refutes in a repellent tone. He was a dangerous antagonist. Of the sciences he had no knowledge, as also of a higher conception of Judaism; he even boasted of his ignorance in such things; it was quite sufficient to him to be thoroughly conversant with the Talmud. Abraham ben David and Serachya Halevi were the profoundest Talmudists since the death of Tam.

Bourg de St. Gilles, the second chief town of Duke Raymond V. of Toulouse, had a congregation of a hundred members. This congregation, as well as the others under Count Raymond, whom the Troubadours called the Good Duke, lived under the most happy conditions, and were promoted to offices of State. Abba Mari ben Isaac, of St. Gilles, who has obtained a certain significance through his son, was the Sheriff of the town. This son, Isaac ben Abba-Mari, who was probably a pupil of Tam, had adopted from the celebrated master of Rameru, a solid rather than an acute treatment of the Talmud. Already in his seventeenth year, he composed, at

the instance of his father, a compendium of certain ritual laws, and combined in a work, (entitled "Ittur"), all the results of his investigations in the Talmud upon the Rabbinical civil laws and rites.

Raymond VI. of Toulouse, favoured the Jews almost more even than his father, and promoted them to official places (1192—1222). On this account, and for other similar sins, he was virulently persecuted by Pope Innocent III., and ultimately had to swear solemnly that he would depose the Jews from their offices, that he would never employ any Jews, and generally that he would not favour them.

Beaucaire (Belcaire), which belonged to the dukedom of Toulouse, also had a not inconsiderable congregation, at the head of which stood Kalonymos, "the prince." In the flourishing commercial town of Marseilles, which at that time formed a free State, there lived three hundred Jewish families, which were grouped into two different congregations. The minor congregation, the members of which dwelt on the Haven, and probably carried on navigation, or at least transmarine business, had at their head a noble man, Jacob Perpignano (died 1170). The larger congregation had a Talmudical college, over which Simon ben Anatolio presided. In Marseilles also Jews were admitted to offices.

The beginning of the last two decades of the twelfth century constituted the boundary line between fortune and misfortune for the Jews of North France, who were partly subject to the king and partly to the more or less dependent barons. As long as the Jews lived under the friendly king, Louis VII., they continued in their felicitous condition, and were protected from the malevolent attacks of the clergy. Even the resolution of the Lateran Council, that no Jew might keep any Christian nurses or domestics, Louis would not comply with. He asked of the Pope, at the request of the Jews, whether some ulterior purpose was not aimed at in this resolution,

and whether the Jews were to be refused the right to build synagogues. In spite of the Papal decision, he exercised so little energy in enforcing this canonical law, that even his son Philip Augustus, in whose favour he abdicated (1169) on account of feebleness, did not feel inclined to hold himself bound by it. When the Archbishop of Sens insisted on its fulfilment, and endeavoured to bring into effect several other determinations of the Church, which encroached on the prerogatives of the crown, the young king sent him into banishment. By-and-bye, however, other considerations, though not different influences, gained the ascendancy over the not very noble nature of Philip Augustus, at that time only twenty-five years old, which caused him to alter his mind about the Jews, and transformed him into one of the kings most hostile to them in Jewish history.

Although lord of the whole of France, and feudal superior of the mighty king of England, the French king at that time was poor in possessions of his own. The small tract of land, Isle de France, with a few scattered provinces, constituted his only inheritance. All the rest of the land was under the dominion of powerful barons. The policy of Philip Augustus aimed at enriching the French crown by the acquisition of landed estates, and the transforming of the pseudo-fiefdom of the barons into a reality. For this end he wanted money above all things, in order to raise troops and to support them. The wealth of the French Jews appeared to him to be a means for accomplishing this object, and he pondered how he might appropriate it. He had indeed not long to consider; for he needed only to lend his ear to the prejudices that prevailed against them, in order to obtain the right of plundering and oppressing them. Although the Jews of France were not the only persons who practised usury—for Christians also, in spite of clerical

prohibitions, took exorbitant interest—and although the Jews of that country were not all usurers, probably only those who were rich, Philip Augustus nevertheless made the Jews one and all responsible for the impoverishment of reckless debtors; and although personally he did not seriously believe in that monstrous delusion which arose in the twelfth century, whence and on what ground we know not—viz., that the Jews slaughtered Christian children on the Passover festival, and drank their blood—he nevertheless acted as if they were incarnate murderers, so as to have a convenient pretext for exacting and extorting money from them. Even before the death of the old king, Philip Augustus caused numbers of Jews belonging to his estate to be seized without any definite charge, whilst they were praying in their synagogues, and cast into prison (19th January, 1180). He calculated that the Jews would be ready to offer a large ransom for their liberation. When they had collected fifteen hundred marks of silver, they were set at liberty. This extortion was only a prelude to further demands. Before the end of the year, 1180, the king declared all claims of debt of the Jews against the Christians to be null and void; but, nevertheless, took care to appropriate a fifth part of the debts of the Christians to the exchequer. An inhabitant of Vincennes encouraged him by explaining to him that it was a godly work to rob the Jews of their wealth. Philip Augustus was not yet satisfied that he had made the rich Jews beggars, but shortly afterwards published an edict for all the Jews in his province to leave it between April and St. John's Day (1181). Only their moveable property were they allowed to take away; on the other hand, their fields, vine-hills, barns, and wine-presses, which must have yielded a good revenue, were to come into the possession of the king. The deserted

synagogues were used as churches. That it is untrue that the Jews of France were hated by the people on account of their usury, alleged child-slaying, and other crimes, is proved in no way more decisively than by the circumstance that counts, barons, and even bishops strenuously endeavoured to turn the king from his purpose, and to induce him to repeal the edict of banishment against the Jews. All their efforts, however, were in vain; young Philip Augustus, who had much of Louis XIV. in him, was, in spite of his youth, so obstinate that (as his biographer says) a rock could be shaken more easily than his resolution. And so there was nothing left to the Jews of Paris and its environs than once more to take the wanderer's staff in hand, and leave the homes where they had lived for many centuries. The offer to retain possession of their property if they would submit to baptism, they held as opposed to their profession of faith in the Unity. Only a few went over to Christianity.

Fortunately for the Jews, the personal estate of the king, as mentioned above, was at that time not very large, and the vassals were still independent enough to refuse to obey the order to expel all Jews from their province. In this manner they were not only able to dwell in the greatest part of France, but even those who had been driven out of the territory of Philip Augustus could settle among them. The Talmudical College of Paris fell into decay, but those in the Champagne, where the Tossafist school had scope for progressing, remained standing. The small town of Rameru continued to be the centre of study. Here Isaac ben Samuel, of Dampierre (Ri), a great grandson of Rashi, held his school. He was the chief authority after the death of his uncle Tam. Learned and acute, like his ancestors, Isaac occupied himself with completing Rashi's commentary, with collecting and arranging

his notes on the whole Talmud, and with determining the questions and solutions of difficult passages in the Talmud by the Tossafists. What depth of knowledge of the thickly accumulated material of the Talmud must he have possessed to undertake this work, to adjust the most irreconcilable opinions, to discover an inconsistency here, and explain one away there ! The story is told later that in the college of Isaac the elder there were sixty learned members, of whom all were not only proficient in the whole of the Talmud, but each one of them knew by heart and in a masterly manner one of the sixty tractates. Isaac's first collection of the glosses was called "the oldest Tossafot." In consequence of the hostile spirit which began to prevail in North France, through Philip Augustus, Isaac's son, named Elchanan, who although young, had gained renown among the Tossafists, fell a martyr to his religion, in the lifetime of his father (1184).

Some years later (1191) Philip Augustus sent new victims to a martyr's grave. In the little town of Bray (on the Seine, north of Sens), which belonged to the county of Champagne, a Christian, a subject of the king, murdered a Jew. The relatives of the murdered man appealed to the Countess, and obtained her permission, through rich presents of money, to hang the murderer. By malignant design or accident, the execution took place on the Purim festival, and this circumstance reminded the people of Haman's gallows, and perhaps of something else. As soon as the king had received news of the execution of his subject, and, moreover, through a distorted report, that the Jews had bound the hands of the murderer, crowned him with a garland of thorns, and dragged him through the streets, he hastened with his troops to Bray, encompassed the houses of the Jews with guards, that none of them might escape, and

allowed them only the alternative between death and conversion. The congregation did not hesitate a moment. The members bravely determined to die at one another's hands rather than at those of the executioner. Philip caused nearly one hundred to be burnt, and only spared the children under thirteen years. A few days later the king, with blood-imbrued hands, was consecrated as champion of the Cross and sailed to Syria, to the Crusade. The so-called Holy War improved him but little.

All efforts to dislodge that really great hero, Saladin, from Jerusalem and the district belonging to it, had hitherto proved fruitless. Richard the Lion-hearted was compelled to patch up a truce discreditable to the Christians, and the only favour that he obtained was that Christian pilgrims were to be allowed to visit at any time the Church of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

A new Crusade had to be preached; the dying embers of fanaticism, from which the Jews had suffered more than from any other cause, had once more to be rekindled. Pope Innocent III., the most thoughtless and arbitrary of all princes of the church, took the cause in hand with frantic energy. He commissioned a preacher, Fulko de Neuilly, who had till then lived a heedless, reckless, sinful life, to preach the Crusade in towns and villages; and this agent, a second Rudolph, used the unpopularity of the Jews and the prospect of plundering them as a convenient means for enlisting soldiers for the armies of the Cross. He preached that Christian debtors, when once they had taken the Cross, were absolved from their debts to their Jewish creditors. Many barons of North France inspired, or pretending to be inspired by Fulko's fanatical harangues, enrolled themselves as Crusaders; and now that their hatred of the Jews was once more inflamed, they drove them out of their provinces, and the Jews, being im-

poverished by the cancelling of their debts, had nothing left which the barons could extort from them.

Contrary to all expectations, Philip Augustus, the arch-enemy of the Jews, freely received the exiles in his own territory, and allowed those who had formerly been expelled by him to return again to their hearths (July, 1198). This inconsistent and tolerant action of the king, who had been hitherto invariably severe, provoked much surprise in the world at the time. It seemed as if Philip Augustus had taken this step for the purpose of mortifying the clergy and the Pope Innocent III., because they had declared the Holy War.

At the first glance it appears as if the French king and the barons were filled with a sort of solicitude for the Jews, as if the latter were so dear to them that they could not exist without them. They looked jealously at one another if Jews emigrated from one province to another; they claimed them back again, made treaties with one another, that any Jews who had changed their places of abode were to be delivered over to their original lord; and went so far as even to make them swear not to pass beyond their borders. But behind this apparent solicitude there lurked the most contemptible greed for money. The Jews of North France were considered by the kings and barons as convenient sources whence to obtain gold. Already, in the year 1198, Philip Augustus made a treaty of reciprocity with Thibaut of Champagne, that neither should detain any Jews who had emigrated from the territory of the one and settled in that of the other, but that the Jews should be sent back to the province whence they had come. Philip Augustus, however, like most of the kings of France, was not a man of his word; he refused to yield up the Jews who had, on account of excessive

oppression, moved from Champagne, which was thickly populated with Jews, to Francia.

Thus, from the time of Philip Augustus, the Jews of North France lost one of the most precious privileges of mankind, freedom of motion. Whilst formerly they were able to move about at will from place to place, they were now compelled to remain on their native soil like bondsmen. If they ventured to move from it, the lord of the land would seize their real property and alienate it. At first the Jews did not know what to make of this state of affairs, and the Rabbinical authority of the time, Isaac of Dampierre, decided that no Jew might buy property that had been violently confiscated; and if he did buy such property, he was to return it to its original owner. Gradually this violent robbery became law. But besides freedom of locomotion, even the right of possession was denied them. "The property of the Jews belongs to the baron" was the leading principle of North French legislation concerning the Jews. The king and the barons, indeed, allowed the Jews to take high interest (two deniers a week on a livre), as it served their interest to do so. The bonds had to be drawn up by a notary, and provided with the public seal, and this had to be signed by two notables. In this manner the lord of the province could obtain information of the money transactions of capitalists. On every settled account the lord levied a large duty (cens). The Jews of North France were estimated only according to what they possessed. They were always treated as revenue-producing bondsmen. A nobleman sold to the Duchess of Champagne his whole estate of "chattels and Jews." The Jews were thus more secure from expulsion and persecution, as their absence was in no wise a source of gratification to anyone, but they soon sank under the infliction of a thousand different kinds of drudgery, and their

moral sensibilities were thereby weakened. They were restricted to the business of money getting, and of this they acquired as much as possible in order to be able to satisfy their tormentors. The clergy never failed to add fuel to the fire of hatred against the Jews, and shut them out of the Christian world as lepers. Bishop Odo, of Paris, who issued canonical constitutions (1197), forbade Christians to buy meat of Jews, to hold discussions with them, and generally to have any intercourse with them. Those who disobeyed were liable to the sentence of excommunication. If the Jews of North France had not then been possessed by such a burning passion for the study of the Talmud, they would certainly have degenerated to a level as low as their enemies wished and described them as having fallen to. The Talmud purely by itself saved them from brutalised selfishness and moral decay. After the death of Isaac the collector of the Tossafot (about 1200), the study of the Talmud in North France was represented by three men who had sprung from his school: Judah Sir Leon ben Isaac, the Pious (ha-Chasid), in Paris (born 1166, died 1224), Samson ben Abraham in Sens (died before 1226), and his brother, Isaac the younger (Rizba) in Dampierre. All three expounded the Talmud in their schools in the usual manner, decided on religious questions that were submitted to them, and solved the original Tossafot, of which those of Samson exist in a separate form under the name of Sens Tossafot.

These three Rabbis of North France did not lead the way to new developments in any branch of learning, they had no taste for science or poetry. Holy Writ, equally with other contemporary Talmudists, they knew only in the light of the Agadic method of exposition. They were not destitute of acuteness, but they wanted breadth of view. Samson was so incapable of doing justice to the sincerity

of religious feeling in the Karaites, who, if possible, were even too scrupulous in the discharge of their religious duties, that he not only held it illegal to intermarry with them, but wished them to be regarded as idolaters, whose wine a Rabbanite might not drink. Judah Sir Leon wrote a work in which he endeavours to shadow forth a higher ideal which the truly pious should aim at. This work is indeed instinct with religious feeling, and of a singularly pure morality; but it is also full of perverted ideas of the world, and of crass superstition. It mirrors faithfully the spirit of that time; that religious scrupulousness, which fearfully considers at every step whether it does not commit or give occasion to a sin; that gloomy disposition which detects in every natural impulse the incitement of Satan; that paltry spirit, which treats of every occurrence as full of significance. Side by side with sentences of which philosophers need not be ashamed, there occur absurdities in this "Book of the Pious," which only the decline in all conditions of life, such as the Jews had experienced since Philip Augustus, could have produced.

Judah Sir Leon, the pious, became the master of many pupils, who afterwards acquired renown: Solomon of Montpellier, Moses of Coucy, Isaac of Vienna, and others who became Rabbis, and promoters of the study of the Talmud in Spain, France, and Germany. All were guided by his spirit, beheld Judaism only as through a thick layer of fog, and were opponents of free investigation. The disciples of his school later on entered into a warm controversy with the Spanish exponents of a higher conception of Judaism.

In England, and in those French provinces which belonged at that time to England (Normandy, Bretagne, Anjou, Touraine, Maine, Guienne, Poitou and Gascogne), the Jews lived under Henry II., for a long time in undis-

turbed and happy quiet. They inhabited the large towns, and in London many of them attained to such wealth that their houses had the appearance of royal palaces. The summons to the first and second Crusades found no response among the stolid islanders, and in consequence no martyrs were found among the Jews of England at that time. Already then many Englishmen had conceived such a predilection for Judaism that they caused themselves to be admitted into the covenant. There existed a congregation which consisted entirely of proselytes. Their communal and intellectual life they drew from France, which at that time stood in close connection with England. In London, Jacob of Orleans, a pupil of Tam, a famous Tosafist, founded his school. Benjamin of Canterbury, was likewise a disciple of the same teacher of Rameru. The knightly son of Henry, Richard the Lion-hearted, was equally averse to persecution, and the Jewish community of England might have developed peacefully under him, had not the fanaticism kindled by Thomas à Becket treated them as outcasts. On Richard's coronation (3rd September, 1189), the first persecution broke out upon the Jews which culminated a century later in their being expelled to a man from that happy island. Richard's coronation ceremony was the first scene of a bloody drama for the Jews.

As Richard was returning to his palace from the coronation in the church, there entered into the state-room, among others who came to do homage to the king, a deputation of the richest and most prominent members of the whole community of England, to hand in their presents. On their appearance, Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, a fanatical church dignitary, remarked darkly, that no presents might be accepted from Jews, and that they must be dismissed from the palace, as through their religion they had forfeited the privilege to

rank among other nations. Richard, who did not think to what evil consequences the expulsion of the Jews would give occasion, innocently followed the instruction of the archbishop. The palace menials, who showed the Jews out of the palace, thought to gain the approval of their masters by abusing them. The gaping crowd likewise fell to, and pursued the Jewish deputies with blows of the fist, with stones, and clubs. Soon there spread about in all parts of London the false report that the king desired to humble and massacre the Jews, and immediately the mob and the crusading rabble trooped together to enrich themselves with the possessions of the Jews. The pillagers made an attack upon the houses in which the Jews had fortified themselves, and set fire to them. Meanwhile night had come, and covered with her shadows the ghastly butchery of the Jews. It was in vain that the newly crowned king sent one of his courtiers, Ranulph de Granville, to make inquiries about the uproar, and put a stop to it. At first he could not make himself heard, and was moreover assailed with jeers by the raging mob. Thus many Jews perished; others killed themselves, as they were called upon to submit to baptism, among them also Jacob of Orleans. Most of the Jewish houses were burnt, and the synagogues destroyed. The fire, which had been applied in order to destroy the records of the debts of Christians to Jews, spread and ravaged a part of the city. Only one Jew apostatised to Christianity, the wealthy Benedict of York, who with his fellow-deputy had been ejected from the palace, and dragged into a church, where he pretended to submit to baptism. When Richard, however, learnt the real circumstances of the affair, he ordered those most implicated to be executed. Richard was so thoughtful for the welfare of the Jews of his empire that, being afraid lest the persecution of the Jews might be emulated

in England and in his French dominions, he promulgated edicts that the Jews were to be left untouched, and even sent heralds to Normandy and Poitou to announce that sporadic outbreaks against the Jews were to be forthwith suppressed. He, moreover, allowed Benedict of York to return to Judaism when he learnt that he had been baptised under compulsion, and heard from him the confession that he had remained a Jew at heart, and wanted to die as such. The fanatical Archbishop of Canterbury, who was present at the interview, being asked his opinion, answered, "If he will not remain a son of God, let him be a son of the devil." As long as Richard remained in London, the Jews were left in peace; but as soon as he crossed the Channel, in order to inaugurate a new crusade together with Philip Augustus, the scenes of London were repeated all over England. It was not only religious zeal which let loose the rage of the Christians against the Jews of England, but rather envy at their prosperity, and, above all, desire for other people's property. The first to suffer was the wealthy and notable congregation in the flourishing commercial city of Lynn. If we are to believe Christian writers, it would appear that it was the Jews who first provoked the fury of the Christians against them. They are said to have attacked a baptised Jew, and when he fled for refuge into a church, they captured it by storm. Whereupon the Christians are said to have been called to arms, there happening likewise to be Crusaders in the city. The Jews being defeated by these latter took refuge in their houses, and there were assaulted with fire and sword, from which but few escaped. It is impossible, however, that the Jews should have been the first to attack, for the citizens themselves, when called upon by royal commissioners to explain these disturbances, fixed the blame on the Crusaders, who had in the meantime

decamped with the booty of the Jews. A Jewish physician, who, by his modesty and skill, had won popularity even among the Christians, was murdered by these ruffians for mourning too much for his people, and invoking the justice of heaven upon their murderers.

Soon after the Lynn massacre, the Jews of Norwich were surprised in their houses, and butchered (6th February, 1190). A month later (7th March), the Jews of Stamford were severely maltreated, because on the market day many Crusaders and strangers happened to be in the city, who were sure to be in stronger force than their opponents, in case the Jews, assisted by the citizens, should offer them resistance. They believed they were performing a godly act if they treated as enemies those whose property they were lusting after, and thought to extort from the Jews their travelling expenses to the Crusades. Without the least provocation they fell upon the Jews, murdered some, forced others to fly to the royal castle, broke into the houses, and carried away everything valuable. The robber Crusaders absconded from the town with their booty so that none of it should fall into the hands of the royal judges. One of these brigands was just saved from becoming a saint; he deposited his plunder at the house of a friend, who murdered him to get possession of his ill-gotten gains. The congregation of Lincoln was near sharing the fate of their brethren of Lynn, Norwich, and Stamford; but on getting wind of the danger threatening them, they betook themselves with their property to the royal castle for protection.

But most tragic of all was the lot of the Jews of York, because among them were two men, who enjoyed princely fortunes, had built magnificent palaces, and had accordingly aroused the envy of the Christian inhabitants. One of these was

Joceus, the other was Benedict, who had been so brutally ill-treated at Richard's coronation. The latter, who had reverted to Judaism after his compulsory baptism, died from the wounds which had been inflicted on him in London. Crusaders who wanted to obtain wealth, citizens who looked unfavourably at the prosperity of the Jews, noblemen who owed money to them, and priests who were animated by a blood-thirsty fanaticism, all entered into a conspiracy to destroy the Jews of York. In the dead of the night, during a conflagration which had arisen either by accident or design, the conspirators broke into the house of Benedict, which was inhabited only by his wife and daughters, carried away all valuables, and set the house on fire. Joceus, who had foreseen the danger threatening him, repaired with his family and most of the members of the congregation to the tower watchman, and demanded protection in the fortress. But few Jews remained behind in the town, and these were attacked by the conspirators, who made their appearance on the day following their successful experiment, and they were offered the choice between baptism and death. The Jews in the tower, however, were formally besieged by a huge multitude of people of all ranks, and were called upon to embrace Christianity. One day the watchman sauntered out of the fortress, and as the Jews feared that he would betray them and hand them over to their enemies, they resolved to refuse him re-admittance into the fortress. The latter made complaint before a high royal officer, the governor of the fortress, who happened to be present at the time, that the Jews had had the audacity to shut him out of the fortress which had been entrusted to him, and the governor, infuriated in the highest degree, now gave orders to the besieging multitude to demolish the fortress and take vengeance on the Jews. He even brought

up reinforcements, in order to ensure his victory. The siege lasted six days; the Jews repulsed all attacks bravely. Already the governor began to repent of having given orders to storm the place. Many noblemen, and sober and prudent citizens, already began to withdraw from an enterprise which, when the king would hear of it, promised so many evil consequences to them, when up rose a monk in a white robe, who exhorted the besiegers by voice and example to continue their work. He held a special solemn service, read mass, took the holy water to assure himself that divine assistance would be rendered them in the conquering of a weak little troop of Jews in the castle. He was nevertheless struck to the ground by a stone hurled by a Jewish hand, and yielded up his fanatical spirit.

The Jews had in the meantime exhausted their provisions, and death stared them in the face. When the men deliberated what step they should take, one learned in the Law, who had come over from France, Yom Tob of Joigny, counselled them to slay one another, saying, "God whose decisions are inscrutable, desires that we should die for our holy religion. Death is at hand, unless you prefer for a short span of life to be unfaithful to that religion. As we must one day prefer a glorious death to a shameful life, it is advisable that we take our choice of the most honourable and noblest mode of death. The life which our Creator has given us we will render back to Him with our own hands. This example many pious men and congregations have given us in ancient and modern times." Many were of the same way of thinking; the timid however, would not abandon the hope of being able to save their lives. In the meantime the heroic Rabbi made preparations for the carrying out of his self-sacrifice. All valuables were burnt, fire was applied to the doors, and the

men with the courage of zealots passed the knife across the throats of those dearest to them. Jocus, as leader of the congregations, first slew his beloved wife Anna, and to him was allotted the honour of being sacrificed by the Rabbi. Thus most of them perished at one another's hands, on the day before that great Sabbath which forms the introductory festival in celebration of the redemption from Egyptian bondage, at about the same time as when the last zealots had put themselves to death in a similar manner after the destruction of the Temple, to avoid falling into the hands of the Romans. The few survivors had to contend during the night with the spreading fire, and to provide themselves with a spot less associated with danger. On the day after the Sabbath (17th March, 1190), as the enemy advanced to the attack, the survivors declared their willingness to open the gate, and receive baptism, and to convince their foes of the shocking sacrifice that had been performed, they threw the corpses of the suicides from the wall. Scarcely were the gates opened, when the leader of the Christian conspirators, together with his guardsmen, drew their swords upon them, as they were begging with tears in their eyes to be baptised; thus not a single member of the Jewish congregation of York survived; altogether about 500 Jews perished. Soon after, on Palm Sunday (18th Mar.), 750 Jews were butchered by the Crusaders in Bury St. Edmunds. Throughout England, wherever Jews were to be found, unless protected by the citizens, they met with the death of martyrs. A congregation of twenty families, consisting only of Jewish proselytes, likewise suffered martyrdom. King Richard was greatly enraged at these cruelties practised on the Jews, and commissioned his Chancellor to institute inquiries, and punish the guilty. But the Crusaders had absconded, the guilty citizens and noblemen fled to Scotland, and

the rest escaped punishment. Only the governor of York was deposed from his office.

But on the accession of Richard's brother, King John, who through his unprincipled conduct degraded England into a vassalage of the papal chair, the Jews were robbed even of the help of generous citizens. If John behaved recklessly to all the world, the Jews certainly could not expect to be well treated by him.

Somewhat more fortunately placed than their co-religionists in France and England were the Jews of the German Empire, which at that time was very extensive. The German nations, by nature more religious, and therefore also more fanatical than the French and other Romance nations, often indeed made their existence a veritable hell upon earth; but as emperors and princes protected them, the hatred against them could not produce any material effect. As Henry IV., during the first Crusade, and Conrad III. gave them their support, the notion arose that the German emperors had constituted themselves the guardians of the Jews, and that therefore any one who meddled with them to a certain extent committed high treason, a crime which rendered the delinquent liable to the penalty of becoming a body-slave. The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, the most powerful German emperor, who took Charlemagne for a model, was the first to start the practice of converting free Jews into body-slaves. The legend is interesting, which informs us of the connection of the German emperor with the Jews in relation to history. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, a third part of them are said to have been sold as slaves at the rate of thirty for a bad penny. These, scattered as they were throughout the Roman empire, were made the property of the Roman emperor, and became his body-slaves. The emperor, however, on his side, had taken upon himself the duty of protecting them, as a reward

for Josephus' service to Titus, whom he cured of gout. The rights and obligations of the Roman emperors towards the Jews passed over, through Charlemagne, to the German emperors, and hence the latter were similarly constituted the protectors of the Jews, and the Jews became their body-slaves. The Jews had already been body-slaves elsewhere, in France and England; that is, they were half and half the property of the king or the barons, and their purses had constantly to replenish the empty coffers of their lords under one or another title. In Germany, however, they had at least, in return, the protection of the emperor. It was certainly not to be expected that the successors of Vespasian, of the house of Teut, should fulfil this office of champion of the Jews quite disinterestedly. On the contrary, they wanted more revenue than other princes, as they had no land, and they received but little money from their vassals. It seemed, therefore, only right that the Jews should, in return for his imperial support, supply the emperor with pocket money.

Although the Jews of Germany were body-slaves, they were not altogether robbed of their personal rights, in the twelfth century at least. They were allowed to carry weapons, and even to fight single combats. During the siege of Worms, Jews fought side by side with Christians, and the Rabbi even permitted them to use weapons on the Sabbath for the purpose of defence. They had for the most part their own jurisdiction, and were not compelled to appear before an alien judge. Now and again some of them attained a higher position. The brave Duke Leopold of Austria, who became renowned in history by his capture of King Richard of England, had a Jewish Finance Minister, who, in spite of the canonical resolution of the Lateran council, was allowed to keep Christian servants. In Silesia, in the neighbourhood of Breslau, Jews had still in their possession several

villages with the bondsmen appertaining to them. But the more the prohibition to keep Christian domestics gained ground, the more were the Jews obliged to alienate their landed estates, to remove to the towns, and there to engage in business and money-lending. In spite of the imperial protection, they were often exposed to ill-treatment. The infamous invention that the Jews used Christian blood, found credence also in Germany and here more than in any other place, and wherever the dead body of a Christian was found, princes and people immediately laid the murder at the door of the Jews. A ship containing Jews was proceeding from Cologne to Boppard, and after it there sailed another with Christian passengers. The latter found a Christian woman dead in Boppard, and forthwith they jumped to the conclusion that the Jews of the first ship had slain her; the Christians immediately pursued and overtook them, and called upon them to submit to baptism, and on their refusal hurled them into the floods of the Rhine. In the general peace which the emperor arranged before his expedition, the Jews were also included. He warned priest and monk not to stir up the people against them; but nevertheless, they had to supply funds for the Crusade.

In spite of this, there was repeated under Frederick's successor, Henry VI., a horrible massacre of the Jews, the fanatics breaking loose upon them at different places from the district of the Rhine to Vienna. Under such afflicting circumstances, when they were not sure of their lives for one moment, it was impossible for them to advance to a healthier culture. They were deeply religious and beneficent, and they assisted one another, and foreign immigrants, with everything that they possessed. Religion and the cohesion of the members of the community were the pillars on which the weak had to lean for support; but they were without

enthusiasm or bent for any branch of knowledge. The study of the Talmud continued to be their only occupation which was of any spiritual character; but even there they only pursued the road marked out for them by Rashi and the Tossafists, without ever diverging from it. Those who desired to give spiritual nourishment to their mind, as well as intellectual acumen, absorbed themselves in a kind of secret lore, the import and significance of which is lost to us.

Ephraim ben Jacob, of Bonn (born 1132, died about 1200), made a name for himself about this time. He was not, indeed, a Rabbi by profession, but was none the less trusted as a Talmudical authority; he was, in addition, an extraordinary linguist. At the age of thirteen he was shut up with his relatives in the Tower of Wolkenburg during the persecution that attended the second Crusade; there he saw the sufferings of his brethren in faith with his own eyes, and described them later on in a Martyrology, which is warm and absolutely impartial. He continued his Martyrology in old age, till the year 1196-97. Ephraim was also a skilful versifier, and he composed many liturgical poems, and particularly lamentations on the sufferings of his time. His verses by no means possess poetical beauty, but they generally sustain a certain level of wit, which is displayed by ingenious allusions to Biblical verses and Talmudical passages.

It seems scarcely credible that Germany, being, as it was, anything but friendly to the Jews at that time, should have approved a Jewish poet who was able to sing in beautiful strains, and knew how to handle rhyme, metre, strophes in the vernacular, and who found so much recognition that he was received into the circle of poets as an equal. Süsskind (Süzkind) of Trimberg, a small town on the French Saal, adopted the poetic style of Walter

von der Vogelweide, and Wolfram of Eschenbach. He was probably a physician by profession; but nothing is known of the events of his life. In the castle of his native town, which stood on the ridge of a vine-covered hill, and was reflected in the serpentine meandering of the Saal, where the Lords of Trimberg had their abode, or in the bower near the castle, in the company of noble knights and beautiful dames, he gave forth, lute in hand, his melodious strains, and the largesses which were showered on him in response formed his sole means of support. Süsskind sang of the high worth of the pure woman. He depicted the knight, the essence of the true nobleman. "Who acts nobly, him will I account noble." He speaks of the freedom of Thought, and how it is unsusceptible of compulsion.

"No one can control the thoughts of fools or of the wise.
Thoughts glide through stone, and steel, and iron."

Süsskind also composed a German psalm.

He describes the all-penetrating feeling of death and transgression, rails at himself in his poverty, and prescribes a virtue-electuary. Once the noblemen, whose bread he ate, appear to have given him a bitter reminder that he, as a Jew, did not belong to their select circle. His despondency arising from this reminder he embodied in beautiful verses. With the best of intentions, the Jews could not cultivate German poetry, since the Jewish poets had to receive kicks rather than the laurel. Being shut up in themselves and their own circle, their ear for the euphony of language became blunted, and it is probable that German poetry has considerably lost by it.

Bohemia also must be enumerated in the list of Talmudical centres, for it produced many men famous for Jewish knowledge. Isaac ben Jacob Halaban of Prague takes an important place among

the Tossafists; he wrote a deeply penetrating commentary on several Talmudical treatises. His brother Petachya made distant journeys (about 1175-90) through Poland, Russia, the land of the Chazars, Armenia, Media, Persia, Babylonia, and Palestine. His abridged description of his journeys gives interesting notices of the Jews in the East. Even the Jews living in Poland and Russia began to take part in Talmudical learning, which in later times they were to possess as a monopoly.

It is remarkable that the Italian Jews of this period seem almost more destitute of intellectual productions than the Bohemian or Polish Jews. They did not bring forth one single authority even on the Talmud. When it was said in Tam's time, "The law goes forth from Bari, and the word of God from Otranto," it was meant ironically, for they decidedly did not advance the study of the Talmud in any way. The tendency of the time was most favourable to them, certainly as favourable as it was to the Jews of South France. With the exception of a single case, the expulsion of the Jews from Bologna (1171), the Jews in Italy were about this time remarkably free from persecution. The wise Pope Alexander III. was well-disposed to them, and trusted the management of his finances to a Jew, named Yechiel ben Abraham, a member of the family dei Mansi, and nephew of Nathan, the famous author of the Aruch. On the entrance of this Pope into Rome, whence he had been banished for many years on the triumph of a rival Pope, the Jews among others came to meet him with a scroll of the Law and with standards, an honour to the Pope on the part of the Jews which the chronicles do not fail to record. They were treated with respect, and were not obliged to contribute any imposts or Jew-taxes. The favourable feeling of Alexander is proved in the resolutions of the great Council in the Lateran

Church (1179), at which more than three hundred princes of the Church were present. Several anti-Jewish prelates sought to take this opportunity to pass certain mischievous laws against the house of Jacob. The Jews, who received information of their hostile intentions, lived in tormenting anxiety, and in many congregations a fast of three days and special prayers were ordained, that Heaven might frustrate the wickedness of men. History has not recorded what passed in the interior of the great Church assembly. But the definitive decrees bear witness that the gentle spirit of tolerance prevailed over the desire of persecution. The Council only forbade the Jews to keep Christian servants, or in other words, an old Church prohibition was renewed. On the other hand, it was particularly insisted upon that they were not to be dragged by force to baptism, nor to be apprehended without a judicial warrant, nor robbed nor disturbed on their religious festivals. The limitation of a privilege of the Jews, that henceforth Christians were also to be suffered to give evidence against Jews, was justly decreed. Their evidence was valid against Christians, and it was surely not equitable that the Jews, who in reality were subject to the Christians, and were tolerated only out of pure humanity, should in this respect enjoy an advantage over the Christians. Does not this settlement, indeed, give the death-blow to that old Byzantine law and the resolution of the West Gothic Council, that Jews could not act as witnesses against Christians? It was not that the spirit of the Church had grown milder during these five centuries; but the Jews had earned respect for themselves, and accordingly the representatives of Christianity durst not repeat that old principle, "He cannot be true to men who denies God," *i.e.*, the Christian God.

In South Italy, in Naples, and the Island of Sicily, under the Norman dominion, Jews were

still less fettered. Roger II. and William II. expressly confirmed the privilege of trial according to their own laws, equally with the Greeks and Saracens. In Messina they enjoyed equal rights with the Christians, and were eligible for office. A favourite minister and admiral of King Roger of Sicily had a leaning towards Judaism, frequently visited the synagogues, distributed oil for their illumination, and generally subscribed money to meet the requirements of the community. Seeds of a higher culture were scattered in profusion at that time in Italy in consequence of its close intercourse with the East during the crusades and the immigration of the Greeks and Arabians into the kingdom of Naples. The Jews, who have a special facility for mastering foreign languages, spoke, in addition to the vernacular and Hebrew, Arabic and Greek. The ingenious Ibn Ezra, during his residence in Rome, Lucca, Mantua, and elsewhere, was the means of spreading among them a loftier conception of the holy Scriptures and of Judaism. His disciple, Solomon ben Abraham Parchon, of Calatayud, stayed in the university town of Salerno for a long time, and endeavoured to make the Italians acquainted with the science of the Hebrew language and Bible exegesis, they being very ignorant in these departments, and for this purpose he composed a Hebrew lexicon (1160). But all these incitements had no effect on the Italian Jews. They remained in their ignorance, and the history of Jewish literature is unable to mention the most unimportant literary production by an Italian till the second half of the thirteenth century. The land which in later times gave rise to a new style of Hebrew poetry, cannot at this period show one Hebrew poet.

In the circumstance that the northern and central Italian cities were mostly engaged in trade, is to be found the true reason that they were not so

numerously populated with Jews as the southern Italian cities. The great commercial houses, which had a determining voice in the civil council, would not suffer the competition of the Jews. In Genoa there lived only two Jewish families, who had emigrated to that place from Ceuta, on account of the oppression of the Almohades. Pisa, Lucca, Mantua had only small congregations. The two largest, which consisted of 1,300 and 200 families, dwelt in Venice and Rome respectively. On the other hand there were 500 families in Naples, and 300 in Capua who were well treated and respected. The chief of the Neapolitan congregation was David, who bore the title of prince (*principino*). In Benevento there was a congregation of 200 Jews, in Salerno 600, in Trani 200, in Tarento 300, and in Otranto 500. The Jewish congregations in the Island of Sicily were still more numerous. In Messina there existed 200 families, and in the capital Palermo 1,500. This congregation had been strengthened by the arrival of Greek Jews, whom King Roger, after his conquests, had transplanted to that place, in order to establish there the breeding of silk-worms.

When any one sailed from Brundisium across the Adriatic Sea, he landed in the Byzantine empire. Here were numerous and thickly populated Jewish congregations, namely in Greece proper, Thessaly, Macedonia, and Thrace. In Arta (or Larta) there dwelt 100 families, whose president, curiously enough, was called Hercules; in Lepanto the same number; in Crissa, at the foot of Mount Parnassus, 200, who pursued agriculture. In Corinth there were 300 families, in Negropont 200, in Jabustrissa 100, in Saloniki 500, who had a Jewish mayor of their own (*Ephoros*), who received his appointment from the Greek emperor. In Rodosto there lived 400 Jewish families, in Gallipoli 200, in the Island of Mytilene there were

10 congregations, in Chios 400 families, in Samos 300, in Rhodes the same number, and in Cyprus several congregations, among which was one that had the custom of commencing the Sabbath on the morning, not on the evening, and continuing it till Sunday morning. The most important congregations in the Græco-Byzantine empire were those of Thebes and Constantinople, in both of which were nearly 2,000 families, the latter besides containing 500 Karaites. The Theban Jews were the most skilful manufacturers of silk and purple in the whole of Greece. They had among them also rich merchants, silk manufacturers, and learned Talmudists. A wall separated the Rabbinical from the Karaite community in Constantinople.

If the Byzantine empire in the time of its glory under Justinian and Alexius oppressed the Jews, we may be sure that it was not better disposed towards them in the time of its decline and fall, when it was in its last throes of death. The principle which was adopted, that Jews and heretics were not to be admitted to any military post, or office, but at most were to be despised, was of all the changing enactments of this most erratic of states, the most strictly and consistently fulfilled.

The rich and poor, good and bad Jews were, without distinction, hated most bitterly by the Greeks. No Jew was allowed to ride on a horse, the practice only of free-men; it was only by way of exception that the Emperor Emanuel vouchsafed this privilege to his physician-in-ordinary, Solomon, the Egyptian. The foremost Greeks in rank and worth did not think it amiss to molest the Jews publicly, and generally to treat them as slaves; the law did not protect them. Byzantium, celebrated for its avarice from time immemorial, imposed burdensome taxes on them. They endured this insolent brutality with the resignation of martyrs; nor did it make them forget to practise virtue,

and extend charity to the poor. But the Greek Jews were unable to pay any attention to the cultivation of their minds. Not one of their Talmudists has immortalised his name by any work. There were indeed many skilful Hebrew versifiers among them, but their poems are ungainly, "hard as granite, without taste and fragrance." Charisi allows grace in the verse of only one single Jewish poet, Michael ben Kaleb, of Thebes, and he explains this circumstance from the fact that the poet had learnt his art in Spain. In Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine, the amount of the Jewish population might give a statistical scale of Mahometan compared with Christian tolerance. Where the cross was supreme, there were but few and poorly-populated Jewish communities to be found, but where Islam had the ascendancy, there were many and numerously populated Jewish communities. In Antioch, which belonged to a Christian prince, there lived only 10 families, nearly all glass-workers. In Leda (Laodicea) 200, in Jebilé, which belonged to the Genoese, 150, in Bairut (Berytus) 50, in Saida (Sidon) 10; only in Tyre was there a congregation containing so many as 400 members, and there the Jews possessed farms, and were even allowed to pursue the business of navigation. At their head stood Ephraim, of Cairo. On the other hand, in Haleb (Aleppo), which had been raised, through the great Mahometan Prince Nureddin, to the position of second capital after Bagdad, there lived 1,500 Jewish families, among whom were many men opulent and respected at court. Here dwelt the Hebrew poet, Jehuda ben Abbas, the friend of the prince of poets, Jehuda Halevi. He had emigrated to this place from Fez on account of the religious persecution. In the neighbourhood of old Palmyra there lived nearly 2,000 Jewish families, whose men were warlike, and often carried on feuds

with the Christians and Mahometans. The congregation of Damascus counted 3,000 members, among them were many learned Talmudists, one of them, the famous Joseph ben Pilat, who originally came from France. In Damascus there was also a Karaite congregation of some 200 families, and a Samaritan congregation of 400 families, who, although they did not intermarry with one another, nevertheless carried on a peaceful intercourse with the Rabbanites. In the whole of Palestine, which was in the hands of the Christians, there lived scarcely more than 1,000 families. The largest congregations, each of 300 members, existed at that time in Toron de los Caballeros, in Jerusalem and Askalon; in the most important towns of Judæa, on the other hand, there lived only about 200 Jews. The Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem mostly carried on the colouring trade, which they farmed from the Christian king; they lived at the end of the town to the west of Mount Zion. Between the years 1169 and 1175 they were all expelled from that city except one (probably under the very youthful and leprous phantom of a king Baldwin IV.), and he had to pay a high price for farming the colouring trade. The Christians, who were now deeply sunk in vice, believed the holy city to be polluted by the continent Jews. In Askalon there lived, at about this time, 300 Samaritan and 40 Karaite families. In Cæsarea, which formerly harboured many thousands of Jews, there lived then only 10 families, but 200 Samaritans. Of this sect there were many also in their aboriginal seat Samaria and Naplus (Shechem), but not one Rabbanite Jew. Minor congregations of 50 there were in Tiberias and Ullamma, 20 in Gischala, 22 in Bethlehem, and in the other towns only 1 family. Thus was the heritage of Israel given away to strangers. The Jewish inhabitants of Judæa vegetated rather than lived; the study of the Talmud was never cultivated by them.

Acco alone possessed Talmudists, one Zadok, and another Japhet ben Elia, and these were foreigners. About this time many emigrants from Europe, and particularly from South France, settled in Palestine; and these enjoyed such recognition among the Jewish natives by reason of their intellectual superiority, that they were able to move them to celebrate the New Year's festival for two days, which, till then, and from time immemorial, the Palestinians had been accustomed to solemnise for only one day like the other festivals.

If we looked merely from the points of view of number and material importance, we must consider the district between the twin rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, as the chief seat of Judaism. Here there were congregations which numbered 1,000 souls. The former academical cities, Nahardea, Sora, and Pumbaditha, had certainly disappeared; but in their stead the congregations of Bagdad and Mosul (called New Nineveh) had gained an ascendancy over all Asia. The Bagdad congregation contained 1,000 Jewish families with four synagogues, and lived in undisturbed quiet as in the best days of the Caliphate. So free did the Jews of this part feel that they even dared to try to hinder the Mahometan crier in his business in a mosque in Madain (near Bagdad), because he disturbed their service on account of the synagogue being very near the mosque. The Caliph Mahomet Almuktafi had conceived an affection for an estimable and wealthy Jew, Solomon (Chas-dai?), and bestowed on him the office of Exilarch, and created him prince over all the Jews in the Caliphate. The Prince of the Captivity was once more allowed to be surrounded by a retinue, to ride on a horse, to wear silk clothes and a turban; to be accompanied by a guard of honour; and to carry official insignia. If he appeared in public, or repaired to court for an

audience, both Jews and Mahometans were bound to rise before him on penalty of being bastinadoed; a herald went before him, crying, "Make way for our lord, the son of David." The Exilarch appointed and confirmed rabbis, judges, and readers, in all parts under the Caliphate, from Persia to Chorasán and the Caucasus, and as far as Yemen, India and Thibet. He appointed these officials by diploma, for which he expected gifts of honour. Thus the exilarchate was once more raised to the splendour of the time of Bostanai. There also arose again in Bagdad an important Talmudical college, whose principal arrogated to himself the title of Gaon. Isaac Ibn Sakni, who had emigrated from Spain to the East towards the end of the eleventh century, appears to have once more awakened, in these circles, an interest for Talmudical learning. The Exilarch was himself a learned Talmudist. Ali Halevi was at that time the principal of the college, which was once more numerously attended by students. The city Akbara, in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, contained 10,000 Jews, but they had no special importance.

The congregation of Mosul was still more considerable than that of Bagdad. It numbered nearly 7,000 families. This city was elevated to the position of capital through the hero Zenki, father of the great Nureddin — both the terror of the Christians — and as Zenki was not ill-disposed to the Jews, they enjoyed extensive liberties under him. The Arabian historians relate the following story. Once he came with his army to the city Jesirat-ul-Amar (on the higher Tigris), where there dwelt 4,000 Jewish families. They had a synagogue which they believed had been built in the time of Ezra, and Zenki took up his quarters in the house of a Jew. His host complained to him of the impoverishment of the city through these

constant military expeditions, and Zenki thereupon left the city, and ordered his army to encamp in tents before the gates. His successor, Saif-Eddin Ghasi (1146-1149), observed the same friendly attitude towards the Jews. At the head of the Mosul congregation was a man named Zaccai, who also proclaimed himself to be a scion of the house of David, in consequence of which he bore the title of "Prince." He divided, however, his authority with another, who was considered a distinguished astronomer, and bore the title of honour "Profound Understander of the Sphere of Heaven." He was in the service of the Prince of Mosul.

The Jewish inhabitants of New Nineveh were regarded as the most ignorant among the Jews, and were not even conversant with the Talmud. North of Mosul among the Carduchian mountains, or among the mountains of Chaftan, there were many and well-populated congregations, some of whom were oppressed under the Sultans and Persians, but others were free and wild as the forest mountains on which they dwelt. These free Jews in the land of Adher-Baijan (Aserbeidsan) carried weapons, lived in friendly intercourse with the fanatical Assassins who dwelt in that part, and who were the enemies of every one who did not belong to their co-religionists or allies, often making descents to the valley for booty. They were themselves inaccessible to attack, and lived in original primitiveness without knowledge of the sources of their religion. They accepted the rabbi whom the Exilarch sent to them and acted according to his directions. Then there suddenly appeared amongst them (about 1160) an ambitious and versatile man, who thought to profit by the military ability, the bravery and ignorance of these Jews for a purpose which is now unknown. This man, named David Alrui (Alroy) or Ibn Alruchi

(Arruchi) achieved considerable notoriety in his time, and gave material in our own days to a poetical pen for a brilliant romance. This young man, an inhabitant of Amadia, of handsome appearance, clear mind and high courage, had attained to deep knowledge of the Bible and the Talmud, as well as of Arabic literature. On his return to Amadia, which appears to have been the town of his birth, the Jews were not the only persons who were amazed at his vast acquirements, but others also, among whom was the commander of the town, named Zain-Eddin. The violent tumults, which arose in consequence of the Crusades, and of the weakness of the Caliphate, and which made the whole of the country as far as Asia Minor a veritable pandemonium of the various races; the division of the government between the weak Caliph, his vizirs and generals, the Seljuk Sultan, and the Emirs, every one of whom played a distinct part, and sought only conquest and increase of power; the ease with which subordinate persons like Nureddin and Saladin obtained mighty conquests;—the consideration of all these circumstances combined in encouraging David Alrui to play a political part. He wanted, however, to gain over his countrymen and co-religionists, of whom many in his neighbourhood were efficient warriors, to be confederates in his scheme. This he could only effect if he were able to awaken their national sentiment. David Alrui accordingly issued a spirited appeal to the Jews of Asia, saying that he was appointed by God to deliver them from the yoke of the Mahometans, and to bring them back to Jerusalem. For this purpose they were to assist him in waging war against the nations. The first place to which David Alrui turned his eyes was the strong castle of Amadia, which he thought would serve as an excellent base of operations for his enterprises. To get possession of it, he wrote to the Jews of

Adherbaijan, Mosul, and Bagdad, to come in great numbers to Amadia, and bring swords and other implements of war under their cloaks. In response to this summons, many Jews who believed Alrui to be the promised Messiah, met in the town with sharpened weapons concealed about their person at an appointed time; and the commandant at first entertained no suspicion, as he thought that this great crowd was attracted to the town by Alrui's fame as a scholar.

At this point history abandons us, and we can only have recourse to legend, which continues the thread of the story as follows: At the invitation of the Persian Sultan, David Alrui is said to have appeared before him, unattended by his retinue; he then boldly declared himself to be the Messiah, and he was accordingly thrown into prison in Tabaristan. Whilst the king was deliberating what punishment he should mete out to him and his adherents, Alrui suddenly entered the council chamber, and informed the Sultan and his counsellors, who were sitting in bewilderment, that he had set himself free from prison by the aid of his secret arts, adding that he feared neither the king nor his ministers. The Sultan a second time gave orders for Alrui's seizure, but the latter made himself invisible, and in this manner crossed over a river, defying capture, and lastly travelled in one day to Amadia, a distance which ordinarily took ten days. When he suddenly made his appearance among his credulous followers, and related to them his adventures, the chiefs were seized with a panic before him. The Sultan gave orders to the Caliph, that he should intimate to the Jewish representatives in Bagdad, that, if they did not turn David Alrui from his purpose, he would put all the Jews of his empire to the sword.

The enthusiasm for David Alrui had spread, especially among the Jews of Bagdad, and afforded

two knaves an opportunity for defrauding the ignorant populace of their property. They produced two letters, which they gave out were written by the hero of Amadia, in which the redemption was fixed for a certain night. The two impostors now practised on the credulity of the enthusiasts; they were all to commence a flight from Bagdad to Jerusalem on the appointed night, and for this purpose they were to mount their roofs, put on green robes, and await the hour. In their confidence that the hour of redemption was about to arrive, they committed their property into the hands of the two impostors for proper distribution. The night came, the crowd was assembled on the roofs of their houses in eager expectation; women wept, children shouted, every one was on tiptoe of anxiety to attempt the flight, until daybreak opened their eyes to the imposition practised on them. The rogues had decamped with the property entrusted to them. The people of Bagdad called this time "the year of flight," and reckoned the progress of time from this event.

The Exilarch and the principal of the college in Bagdad conceived it their duty, partly on account of the enthusiasm, which was passing all bounds, and partly on account of the punishment with which they had been threatened, to direct their attention to David Alrui, and try to turn him from his purpose by threats of excommunication. The representatives of the congregations of Mosul, Zaccai and Joseph Barihan Alfalach, also wrote to him in the same strain; until at last the Mahometan commandant of Amadia, who was most of all responsible, to absolve himself of his duty, persuaded the father-in-law of Alrui to remove him out of the way. He killed his son-in-law whilst asleep, and thus put an end to the disturbance. The Sultan nevertheless decreed a persecution of the Jews of those provinces which had adhered to Alrui, and the Prince of the Captivity with difficulty appeased his

wrath with a present of a hundred talents of gold. As is usually the case, it is only after his death that a Messiah is actually believed in and revered; many Jews of the congregations in Adherbaijan continued to venerate of the murdered Alrui for a considerable time; they called themselves Menachemists, and swore by his name.

There dwelt an independent, warlike Jewish tribe, at that time, east of Tabaristan, in the province of Chorasan, on the highlands by Nishabur. This tribe counted 4,000 families, and was governed by a Jewish prince named Joseph Amarkala Halevi. These Jews around Nishabur believed that they were descendants of the tribes of Dan, Zebulon, Asher, and Naphtali. They bred cattle in the valleys and mountain slopes, were good archers, had in their midst learned Talmudists, and stood in friendly relationship with the Turkish hordes of Gozan. These people lived on the banks of the river Oxus, between Balch and Bochara, were accustomed to make incursions on the surrounding countries, and were the terror of the civilised nations. Once, when the people of Gozan had repeated their desolating irruptions, the Seljuk Sultan Sinjar Shahin-Shah undertook an expedition against them (1153). His army, however, lost its way in the deserts, and many of the men perished daily through hunger and exhaustion. At length he came to the country of the free Jews, and demanded of them provisions and a free passage to the province of Gozan. The Jews objected that they owed no one any allegiance beyond their own prince and his allies, adding that they would treat their friends' enemies as their own. Immediately they prepared for battle, but Sinjar sent them a message that, if they refused to satisfy his demands, he would, on his return, order the execution of all the Jews in his dominions. This threat had effect; the leaders of the Jews met in

council, and decided that they should consider the safety of their distant brethren, and give the Seljuk army provisions; but at the same time they warned the people of Gozan of the danger menacing them and bade them be prepared. In consequence Sinjar's army, which pressed forward, was routed by the Turkish hordes, and their leaders taken prisoners.

The congregation of Ispahan in Persia numbered at that time 15,000 Jews, and had at their head Sar Shalom, who had been appointed by the Exilarch Rabbi over all the congregations of Persia. In the second Persian town, Hamadan, there are said to have been 50,000 Jews, and in Shiraz 10,000. In the city of Tuster, formerly called Suza, there were still 7,000 Jews, who lived on the banks of the river. The community had fourteen synagogues, and one of them was supposed to contain the grave of Daniel. As the markets of the town lay on one side of the river, and the Jews of the other side were thus shut out from all commerce, those on the one side were more affluent than the others. The latter ascribed their poverty to the circumstance that they had not Daniel's grave in their midst; and they requested that the coffin should be allowed to be in their possession. The others, however, were not prepared to give it up, and the consequence was that feuds and bloody fights arose between the two congregations, until they came to an agreement that the two sides of the town should enjoy possession of the coffin alternately for the space of one year. The removal of the coffin was effected every time with great pomp, and was accompanied by crowds of Jews and Mahometans. When the Sultan Sinjar once came to Suza, and saw this procession in honour of the removal, he thought it shameful that the bones of the pious Daniel should be disturbed in this manner, and commanded that the coffin should be deposited at an equal distance from

both parts of the town. As the river formed the centre, the coffin was placed over the river, hanging on to chains, and in this part no one dared to fish. The bier of Daniel nevertheless proved unable to protect the congregation. At the time when Petachya of Ratisbon was there (about 1180), only two Jews, who were dyers, lived in Suza. The cause of this decrease is not known.

In the north of the Black Sea and in the Crimea, there lived only Karaite Jews; these existed in the most primitive ignorance, had no more knowledge of their own rival doctrine than of the Rabbanite, cut their bread before the Sabbath, and on the evening of the Sabbath remained in total darkness. The Rabbanite Jews, however, had spread to Khiva, where there was a congregation of 8,000 families, and to Samarkand, which had as many as 50,000 Jews, at whose head was Obadiah. Of the community in India, Petachya mentions that there existed Jews with dark skins, that they lived according to the precepts of their religion, but had very little knowledge of the Talmud. Many Jews knew nothing more of Judaism than the celebration of the Sabbath and the Circumcision. In the island of Candy (Ceylon) there are said to have been at this time 23,000 Jews, who stood on an equality with the rest of the inhabitants. The king of this island had sixteen vizirs, four of his own nation, and the same number of Jews, Mahometans, and Christians.

In Aden, which is the key-harbour to the Arabian and Indian sea, there was a large Jewish congregation, which was independent, and had several castles; they carried on war with the Christians of Nubia, and formed a link between Egypt and Persia.

In Arabia there were likewise Jewish congregations, although the first Caliph banished them from the country. It is true they were not allowed

to dwell in Mecca and Medinah, cities sacred to the Mahometans, and it may be that there was nothing specially attractive for them in those cities, for they had become quite insignificant during the five hundred years since Mahomet. But in the fruitful and commercial city of Yemen, and in the desert tracts of North Arabia, on the other hand, there were Jewish congregations. In Yemen there dwelt, it is true, only about 3,000 Jews, who, on account of their busy commercial relations with the neighbouring countries, were not at all uncultured, and numbered learned Talmudists in their midst. The most learned among them was Jacob ben Nathaniel Ibn Al-fayumi. The Yemen Jews were respected for their benevolence. "Their hand is stretched out towards every traveller, they keep open house to strangers, and every weary person finds rest among them." The Jews of North Arabia, on the other hand, were more numerous, and they again, as before the time of Mahomet, formed independent warlike tribes, possessed castles, pursued agriculture, and to some extent also cattle breeding, and journeyed in caravans, in order to transport goods, or, after the fashion of Bedouins, to attack travellers and plunder them. Their number is said to have amounted to 300,000 souls, but this is certainly exaggerated. A principal portion dwelt in Taima, and had a Jewish prince named Chanan, who boasted that he was of Davidic descent. They had among them ascetics who had borrowed from the Karaites the gloomy principle to enjoy no wine, nor flesh, and generally to fast the whole week, with the exception of Sabbaths and festivals; to live in burrows or ricketty houses, to clothe themselves in black, and call themselves "the Mourners of Zion." The farmers and cattle-owners allotted to these pious men, and also to those who occupied themselves with the Talmud, a tenth part of their

yearly produce. A second group of Arabian Jews lived in the neighbourhood of Talmas, and likewise had a prince named Solomon, brother of Chanan of Taima. This prince lived in the old capital Sanaa (Tana), where he possessed a strongly fortified castle of his own. There were ascetics also under him, who fasted forty days in a year, in order to bring about a redemption from the dispersion. A third group inhabited the province of Chaibar, some 50,000, who were mostly all warlike, but possessed also some Talmudical scholars. Even at that time the legend was spread about that the Chaiberan Jews were remnants of ancient Israelite tribes, Gad, Reuben, and half Manasseh. The semi-Arabian cities Wasit, Bassra, and Kufa also had numerous Jewish inhabitants, the first 10,000, the second 2,000, and the third 7,000.

As a large part of Asia, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indus, acknowledged the supremacy of the Abbassidan Caliphs of Bagdad, the Jews of this dominion were subject to the Exilarch of Bagdad. The second Prince of the Captivity, who was again surrounded with pomp, was called Daniel, the son of Solomon (Chasdai, who held office about 1165-75). He was as much respected by the Caliphs Almustanjid and Almustadhi as his father was by Almuktasti. Under Daniel the Talmudical college of Bagdad was raised to such a height that it recalled the old times of the Amoraim and Gaonim. It owed its rise to a man who, at the end of the twelfth century, was called upon to play an important part. Samuel, son of Ali Halevi, the Rabbi of Bagdad, who traced back his genealogy to the prophet Samuel, possessed a depth of knowledge of the Talmud that but few in Asia equalled. But as he was unacquainted with the advance of the study of the Talmud in Spain and France, he continued to stand on the threshold of Talmudical

knowledge, nor had he the ability to form an original judgment upon it. Samuel ben Ali had also, it is true, a thin varnish of philosophical culture, but in that branch he lived three centuries behind his time, being still quite in the lowest class of the school of the Mutazilites. He knew nothing of the new discoveries of Ibn Sina and Alghazali, and not so much as the last development of the philosophy of his Spanish co-religionists, of Ibn Gebirol, Jehuda Halevi, and Abraham Ibn Daud. In his limited range of vision, he considered his attainments to be very considerable, and was, accordingly, extremely proud of them, and was altogether arrogant and ambitious. It appears that Samuel ben Ali assumed the pompous title of Gaon, that his college might obtain supremacy over the whole of Judaism. Two thousand students attended his Talmudical discourses; but before they were admitted to his lectures, they had to acquire a grounding under another Talmudist. Samuel ben Ali sat at his lectures on a kind of throne, and clothed in gold and embroidery; he once more introduced the old custom of not personally addressing the audience, but of expounding the Law to an interpreter (*Meturgeman*), who repeated in a loud voice what he heard from the master. Besides him, there were nine men, who likewise gave discourses, and settled questions of law. But Samuel ben Ali was regarded as judge of appeal, and every Monday he sat in court surrounded by the nine men, who occupied a subordinate position.

When the Exilarch Daniel died (1175), Samuel thought the time propitious for obtaining the highest dignity and authority over the Asiatic communities. Daniel, as it happened, left no male heir; two of his nephews were now contending for the Exilarchate, David and Samuel, both in Mosul. But whilst they were each endeavouring to win over

the political leaders and the congregations to their cause, Samuel ben Ali assumed the possession of all religious and judicial power. He appointed rabbis, judges, and other functionaries on his own authority, appropriated to himself the revenues of the congregation, and delivered the specified portion to the State. His authority was more respected than that of the pretenders for the Exilarchate. Travellers obtained through his name protection and access to all objects of curiosity. The political and religious officials acknowledged only Samuel ben Ali, the principal of the college, and the Gaon of Bagdad. He was, moreover, inclined to assert his dignity by rigorous measures. Sixty slaves were continually at his call to bastinado any one who was pointed out by their lord. He possessed a palatial mansion in Bagdad, and had magnificent pleasure gardens in the neighbourhood of the capital. Thus Samuel ben Ali ruled at that time over all the Asiatic congregations from Damascus to India, and from the Caspian Sea to Arabia. His daughter was looked upon as a marvel, for she was so learned in the Bible and Talmud that she used to deliver lectures to young men, but in such a manner that she could not be seen by her audience. Ambassadors from a heathen nation, from the Moshic hills in Armenia (Tartars?), came to him to obtain Jewish religious teachers for their country, that they might instruct the people in the tenets of Judaism, seven of their chiefs having resolved to embrace that faith (about 1180-85). The traveller Petachya, who has recorded these facts, and is a trustworthy witness, saw the ambassadors from the Caucasian hills with his own eyes. Many scholars of the Law from Babylonia and Egypt, who were poor, determined to repair to this remote nation of proselytes, and instruct them in the Bible and Talmud.

The condition of Judaism in Asia was at that

time very low indeed. Without higher knowledge, without spirit or breadth, the Jews of Asia, learned as well as unlearned, discharged their religious duties in an unsympathetic, mechanical way. Even Talmudical scholars thought that the divine essence was in a bodily form, endowed with limbs, eyes, and motion. So much had the Agada perverted their understanding that they could not comprehend what was purely spiritual; and so penetrated were these corporealists with their perverted notions, that they looked upon those who maintained a spiritual God as heretics and atheists.

The Asiatic Jews had borrowed from the Mahometans and Christians the custom of making pilgrimages to the graves of pious men. A chief resort of pilgrims was the grave of the prophet Ezekiel in the neighbourhood of Kufa. Seventy thousand to eighty thousand Jews came yearly in the autumn from New Year till the Day of Atonement, or feast of Tabernacles, to pray at the supposed grave of the prophet of the exiles, among them also the Exilarch and the principal of the college at Bagdad. The tomb was protected by a vault of cedar wood, overlaid with gold and adorned with beautiful tapestry. Thirty lamps burned there day and night. Beside the tomb there was a handsome synagogue, which was regarded as a temple in miniature, and alleged to have been built by king Joachin and the prophet. In this synagogue a scroll of the Law of considerable size was shown, which the people of the time believed to have been written by the hand of the prophet himself. A separate room (*Ginze*) was set aside for books. Sepulchre and synagogue were enclosed by a turreted wall. The wall was entered through a low narrow gate, which, however, according to popular belief, became elevated and widened at the time of the pilgrimage. In the space inside the wall the pilgrims used to erect their booths for the festival

of Tabernacles. At this sepulchre they were not only devoutly, but even cheerfully disposed. The period after the Day of Atonement was dedicated to gaiety and feasting. As the Mahometans also revered the tomb, and even the wild Karmates, who lived near, swore by the God of Ezekiel, the neighbourhood formed a peaceful asylum, and later on there sprang up an annual market (Pera) with stalls, and a city (Kabur Kesil). The offerings for the maintenance of this mausoleum proved so rich that the surplus was used for the support of Talmudical students and marriageable orphans.

Another resort of pilgrims was the supposed mausoleum of Ezra the scribe. Although this great regenerator exercised his activity only in Judæa, legend nevertheless fixes his grave at Nahar-Samara, in the neighbourhood of the Tigris. The Mahometans, as well as the Jews, also revered this tomb, offered presents for its support, and made pilgrimages to it. In imitation of the Catholic Church, the Jews of Asia also showed sacred relics: the tree, separating into three parts, on which the angels reclined in the house of Abraham, and the stone on which Abraham circumcised himself. All these mythical stories were the fruits of the degenerated spirit of Judaism after the dissolution of the Gaonate.

It is possible that it was owing in part to this decay that many educated Jews apostatised to Islam. One apostate was a celebrated physician of Bagdad—Nathaniel, with the Arabic name of Abul-Barkat Hibat-Allah ben Malka, one of the three medical Coryphæi, who were of the same name, but of different creeds. The Jewish Hibat-Allah was surnamed “The only one of his time” (Wachid-al-Zeman), on account of his extraordinary accomplishments. In addition to a knowledge of medicine, he was versed in philosophy, and the science of the Hebrew language, and, whilst still

a Jew, wrote a commentary on Ecclesiastes. A son of the itinerant Ibn Ezra, named Isaac, who had accompanied his father in his travels, and remained behind in Bagdad, was assisted by the rich Hibat-Allah, and wrote spirited verses on his benefactor and his commentary, and scattered on him much incense. At the end of his poem Isaac Ibn Ezra expressed a wish that his life might extend to the time of the Messianic redemption, and that he might yet behold the majesty of new Jerusalem. Neither, however, waited for this time, but renounced Judaism, and seceded to Islam (1160—70).

A third apostate about this time was Samuel Ibn Abbas, son of the poet Jehuda, of Fez. A writer of beautiful Hebrew, a profound mathematician and philosopher, Samuel had emigrated to the East, on account of the religious coercion of the Almohades. Whilst his father settled at Haleb, Samuel took up his residence in Adherbaijan, entered into the service of the ruler of that place, and ultimately became converted to Mahometanism. The old Jehuda Ibn Abbas, on hearing of his son's change of religion, hastened to him full of grief, in the hope of bringing him back to his hereditary faith, but was suddenly seized with illness in Mosul and died there. Samuel became a rancorous enemy of Judaism and his former co-religionists. He wrote a polemical work "to the confusion of the Jews" (about 1165-75), in which he lays bare and accentuates their faults, and affirms that the Jews had eliminated all passages alluding to Mahomet in their holy writings.

If the Rabbanites in Asia were degenerate, the Karaites of this time were still more so. The Karaites after an existence of 400 years had failed to establish Judaism on a purely biblical basis, but had adopted many precepts of the Talmud, in spite of all their endeavours to steer clear of Tal-

mudical tradition, for the simple reason that they could not help themselves.

As the Mahometans of Egypt, under the dynasty of the Fatimites, were separated from those of the Abbasidan Caliphate in Asia, the Egyptian Jewish community likewise had no inner connection with the Asiatic community. They had a chief of their own, recognised by the Caliph, who exercised spiritual and judicial functions, bore the title Nagid (Arabic Reis), and was, in a certain measure, the Egyptian exilarch. The Nagid had authority to appoint or confirm Rabbis and precentors, and to decree fines, scourgings, and imprisonment, for transgressions and crimes. He received for his duties a varying salary from the congregations and taxes on every judicial document which he granted. There is a legend that the institution of the Nagid was introduced into Egypt at the instance of a Bagdad Caliph's daughter, who was married to a Fatimite Caliph. About this time Nathaniel, in succession to Samuel Abu-Mansur, was invested with this dignity. His Arabic name was Hibat-Allah Ibn Aljami, and he served as physician-extraordinary to Aladhid, the last Fatimite Caliph of Egypt, and later on to Saladin. Ibn Aljami was a man of considerable culture and learning. He spoke Arabic with special facility, wrote several medical treatises, among others a guide for the use of the soul and body, and another on the climatic character of Alexandria. He was much praised for having cleverly discovered life in a man who was about to be interred. This accomplished man was also chief of the college in the Egyptian capital, but he had no reputation as a Talmudist.

The chief congregation was of course in Cairo (New Misr), of 200 Jewish families, and it included many men who were very opulent. They had two synagogues in which there prevailed different rites. In the one the Palestinian rites were

adopted, in the other the Babylonian. According to the first the reading of the Pentateuch on Sabbaths extended over a cycle of three years. The adherents of the Babylonian system, on the other hand, completed it in a cycle of one year. Only on week-day festivals and on the festival of the Rejoicing of the Law was the divine service in both synagogues identical. In Cairo there existed also a Karaite community which is said to have been still more numerous than that of the Rabbanites. They also had a Chief Rabbi who possessed plenary power in religious and judicial matters, and bore the title Prince (Nasi, Reïs). About this time Chiskiya and Solomon I., who believed themselves to be descendants of Anan, successively held this office (about 1160-1200). Many Karaites in Egypt enjoyed favour at court, and were generally superior to the Rabbanites.

The second chief community, which numbered 3,000 families, existed in Alexandria; they had a Rabbi from Provence, Phineas ben Meshullam. So poor were the Jews of Egypt in Talmudical authorities at this time that they were obliged to import a Talmudical instructor from France. A Karaite community existed also in Alexandria. In Bilbeïs (east of the Nile) there was still a large congregation consisting of 3,000 members, who had experienced much trouble through the Crusade of Amalrich. In Fayum, the native city of Saadiah, there lived at that period only twenty Jewish families.

The state of culture of the Egyptian Jews about this time was not more brilliant than that of their Asiatic brethren. They added nothing to the wealth of Jewish literature. The lower classes were so ignorant of the principles of their own religion that they borrowed customs from the neighbouring Karaites, and even such as stood in glaring contradiction to Talmudical Judaism. The Egyptian

congregations also had a pilgrims' centre of their own. In Dimuh, not far from Fostat, in the neighbourhood of the Pyramids, they showed the synagogue of Moses, which they believed the greatest of prophets had built; they admitted that it had been rebuilt, but that was after the destruction of the Temple by Titus. Near this synagogue there was a sycamore of stupendous height, with evergreen leaves and slender stem. This tree, according to the belief of the Egyptian Jews, had shot up from the rod of Moses. On the week-days of the festivals the Jews of Egypt used to make a pilgrimage to Dimuh, and pray in the much hallowed synagogue. And it was from this land of ignorance that there went forth a second Moses for the deliverance of the Jewish race, who had received a mission to promulgate a more refined Judaism, to declare relentless war against superstition, and put an end to ignorance. Egypt became, through Moses Maimuni, the centre of Judaism.

CHAPTER XIII.

MAIMUNI (MAIMONIDES).

Early years of Maimuni (Maimonides)—His journey to Fez—Letter of Consolation of Maimun (father of Maimonides)—Maimuni and the Jewish Converts to Islam—The Maimun Family in Palestine and Egypt—Maimuni's Commentary on the Mishna—Saladin and the Jews—Letter of Maimonides to Yemen—The *Mishne Torah* of Maimuni—Controversies with reference to this Work—Joseph Ibn Aknin—Maimuni as a Physician—Jerusalem again populated by Jews—Maimuni and the Jews of Provence—The *More Nebuchim* and its importance—Death of Maimonides.

1171—1205 C.E.

IN the last part of the twelfth century Judaism appeared to have lost its own centre of gravity, and to have inclined towards utter dissolution. Since the decay of the Gaonate, the South of Spain, with the congregations of Cordova, Granada, Seville and Lucena had assumed the leadership; but, through the intolerance of the Almohades, these places were now without any Jewish congregations, and at the utmost saw Jews under the mask of Mahometanism. The community of Toledo, the new capital of Christian Spain, as well as that of the north central Spanish city, had not yet succeeded in gaining any extensive influence. The communities of South France were still in the first stage of their infancy; the North French Jews were too exclusively absorbed in the Talmud, and oppressed by anxiety for what the morrow would bring. The German Jews were body-slaves of the Germano-Roman empire; the other countries of Europe had scarcely extricated themselves from barbarism. The restored Exilarchate, the offspring of the caprice of a Caliph, was not firmly rooted

enough, even in Asia, to be able to exercise any ascendancy over the more highly-endowed European Jews. Thus there was nowhere a centre to which the widely-dispersed nation might converge. Moreover, since the death of Joseph Ibn Migash and Jacob Tam there had arisen no men of commanding authority who were able to point out a decisive path, or even to make any suggestive remark.

About this time, when dissolution seemed imminent, Maimuni appeared, and became quite independently the prop of the unity of Judaism, the focus for all the communities in the East and West, a man whose decisions as a Rabbinical authority were final, although he was not officially invested with any dignity. He was spiritual king of the Jews, to whom the most important leaders cheerfully submitted. So memorable did everything connected with this great personality appear in the eyes of his contemporaries, that even the day and the hour of his birth have been recorded.

Moses Ibn Maimun (with the long Arabic name Abu-Amran Musa ben Maimun Obaid Allah) was born on the Eve of Passover (30th March, one o'clock p.m., 1135), in Cordova. The youthful training of Maimonides (as he is often called), the man who was destined to bear the future of Judaism on his strong shoulders, was calculated to solidify his character in a most emphatic manner. His father, Maimun ben Joseph, a pupil of Ibn Migash, was, like his ancestors for eight generations back as far as his progenitor Obadiah, a learned Talmudist and member of the Rabbinical college of Cordova. Maimun also took an interest in the sciences, knew mathematics and astronomy, and wrote books on those subjects, as well as on Talmudical topics. It was he who imbued his son with an enthusiastic love for learning and awakened his feeling for an ideal life. Maimuni had scarcely passed his thirteenth year when great misfortune

broke over the community of Cordova through that city being captured by the Almohades (May or June, 1148), who forthwith promulgated fanatical edicts against Jews and Christians, and put before them the alternatives of embracing Islam, expulsion, or death. Maimun and his family went into exile with the great majority of the Cordovan congregation. They are said to have established themselves at Port Almeria, which a year before had been conquered by the Christians. In the year 1151 Almeria also fell into the power of the Almohades, whose fanatical king, of course, did not fail to impose on the Jewish and Christian inhabitants of the city the necessity of changing their religion, as in the other conquered cities of South Spain. From that time the family of Maimun were obliged to lead a wandering life for many years, without being able to find a permanent residence anywhere.

He learnt from his father the Bible, the Talmud, the Jewish branches of learning, Mathematics and Astronomy; he attended lectures on science and medicine by Mahometan professors, and was introduced into the temple of philosophy. Through reading and intercourse he obtained a fund of solid information, and his clear intellect, which ever sought to penetrate into the phenomena of the visible and invisible world, and to make them transparent, regulated his knowledge, however various and diverse it was. Maimuni educated himself to become one of those rarely seen personalities, who cannot tolerate the hidden, secret, and mystical; he struggled everywhere for light and clearness, and cautiously guarded himself against fallacies. His was a thoroughly logical and systematic mind, which had the power of grouping and arranging the greatest and smallest things, and he was a sworn enemy of disorder and chaotic confusion. In this respect he may justly

be called the Jewish Aristotle, and his intellectual character made him capable of cherishing the greatest admiration for the philosopher of Stagira. Aristotle had many worshippers among Jews and Mahometans. Christian thinkers of that time were still unable to scale the height of his mind; but no one before Maimuni had so thoroughly absorbed and penetrated into Aristotle's philosophical system. He carried it before him as his intellectual possession, and thus also perceived more acutely the defects which it betrays.

It was not, however, only his wide and deep knowledge, but his solidity of mind, which constituted Maimuni's distinctive power. He was a perfect sage, in the most beautiful and venerable sense of the word. Well-digested knowledge, calm deliberation, mature conviction, and mighty performance, were harmoniously combined in him. He was thoroughly pervaded by the deepest and most refined sense of religion, by the most conscientious morality, and philosophical wisdom; or rather these three elements, which are generally hostile to one another, had in him come to a complete reconciliation. What he recognised as truth was to him inviolable law; from this he never lapsed for a moment, but sought to realise it by his actions throughout his whole life, unconcerned as to the disadvantages that it might bring him. If, from the point of view of learning, he occupied the first place of his time, and from that of religion and morality he was rivalled by but few of his compeers, in his strongly marked individuality he surpassed all his contemporaries. His actions corresponded to his mind. Maimuni was of the most profound earnestness; he considered life not as a favourable instrument for pleasure, but as a serious mission to labour nobly and to confirm by his deeds the great truth, that man is an image of God. The mean,

false, and impure was abhorred by him with all his soul, and was not permitted to approach him. Hence he had no taste for poetry, for according to the view of the time, "the best of it is false," for it rested on invention and untruth. He considered it a slothful killing of time to occupy oneself with it; personally he would not tolerate at weddings any verse-making except of a religious character, and he made no difference whether it was composed in Hebrew or in a profane language. Every moment of his life was spent profitably, he never frittered away his time even in his youth, like Jehuda Halevi, certainly not all his life long, like Ibn Ezra. With all his severity towards himself he was of a most gentle amiability in criticising and dealing with others. Never once did he allow a bitter word to escape him even against his violent living opponents, and he never imitated the practice of Ibn Ezra, who ridiculed those of his predecessors with whom he disagreed. Only against false notions and theories did he pour out the vials of his scorn, but towards persons themselves, even when they had irritated him, he had only indulgence and forbearance. Modesty and humility were his characteristics in a high degree, as they are of every divinely endowed nature.

All these rare qualities of mind and heart were governed by an extraordinary determination to develop and promulgate the principles and convictions that lived within him, to counteract apathy and feeble reasoning, to cut the ground from under irreligion, and to force light through the opacity of ignorance. Adversity, physical sufferings, misrepresentation, could not turn him from the purpose upon which he had set his mind. This purpose was nothing less than to exhibit Judaism, the whole of Judaism, both Biblical and Talmudical, the ceremonies as well as the dogmas, in such a light that professors of other creeds, and even philo-

sophers, might be convinced of its truth. This design hovered in his mind already in his youth, and ripened in him with age. To this end he mastered thoroughly all those departments of learning which might serve him as a guide. He declared once that he had absorbed all the writings on the religion and worship of idolatrous nations, which were accessible to him through Arabic translations, and we may well believe this declaration, made as it was without any attempt at flourish. Thus a deeper knowledge of heathenism appeared to him indispensable to the proper understanding of Judaism.

Although he was attracted by many branches of learning, which cohered in his mind as one united whole, still there were four special subjects on which he centred most of his attention: the whole range of Biblical and Talmudical writings, philosophy, medicine, mathematics and astronomy. In his twenty-third year he drew up in Hebrew for a friend a Jewish calendar based on astronomical principles (1158). Although this little book has no special importance in itself, it is yet interesting, as it reveals to us that his love of methodical regularity, and his power of clear, systematic survey, dominated him even in his earliest youth. In the same year he commenced a work, the undertaking of which already gives evidence of greatness and boldness of intellect. He began to explain the Mishna independently and in a new light, at an age when most men have scarcely finished their college career—a gigantic task in which he had no model to guide him. He worked at it amidst continual wanderings and while battling with hardships; but so thoroughly was the whole compass of the Talmud before him, that he could manage to dispense with books. A year or two later (1159-60) his father emigrated with him, his younger brother David and his sister, from Spain to

Fez. What led Maimun's family to remove to the land of the greatest intolerance is a matter that has not yet been cleared up. In Fez, as in all North Africa, wherever the bigoted Abdul-mumen ruled, no Jews were allowed to declare themselves, but had to profess their belief in the first article of the Mahometan faith, that Mahomet, its founder, was a prophet; and even the family of Maimun had to assume the mask of Islam. As the religious persecution had now lasted for a decade, the African communities had begun to waver in their religious convictions. Only the strongest minds could continue to pretend to practise the rites of a religion which was forced upon them, and still inwardly to remain faithful to their hereditary religion. The thoughtless multitude gradually became accustomed to the enforced religion, saw in the merciless oppression of Judaism its dissolution, and changing pretence into reality, came near to lending themselves to the notion that God had vouchsafed his revelation on Mount Sinai through Mahomet, and had given another in Mecca, and almost believed that he had selected the Arabians instead of the Jews. This self-abandonment and overwhelming despair filled Maimun with pain, and he sought to counteract their apathy as much as lay in his power, and to confirm the belief in Judaism in the hearts of the pseudo-Mahometan Jews. With this object he wrote in Arabic an exhortation to the community (1160), which is full of mournfulness, and instinct with a deep sense of religion. It warns the community to reflect that the ordained sufferings did not arise from a feeling of revenge on the part of God, but from a desire to chasten the sinners. Moses in his Law had promised Israel a dazzling future which would decidedly not fail. It was accordingly the duty of the sons of his race to adhere firmly to their God and his Torah. The occupation with religion and the practice of what

it enjoined were the ropes of which those who were sinking in the sea of trouble should retain hold. Everyone should, as much as he was able, observe the religious precepts of Judaism, and turn himself in prayer to his God. Whoever was prevented from praying in the prescribed form should, at least, say a short prayer in Hebrew three times a day. Like the Jews who had been forced to baptism under the Spanish West Gothic kings, those who had become perverts under compulsion to Islam now exhorted one another to continue faithful to their ancient religion. Soon Maimun's son also found an opportunity to enter for the first time into the arena, to give expression to his original views on Judaism, to offer encouragement to his comrades in affliction, and to trace out for them a line which they should pursue.

A Jewish writer of excessive piety had declared that all Jews who affected Mahometanism were nothing more nor less than renegades from their faith, and were to be treated as idolaters. He who publicly acknowledged Mahomet's mission as a prophet was to be regarded as a non-Jew, even though he privately fulfilled all the duties of Judaism, and he belonged to that class whose testimony had no validity in a Jewish court, as, for instance, in affairs of marriage. He who visited a mosque, pretending to be a Mahometan, committed a blasphemy, even though he did not take part in prayer; and he only accentuated his offence, when, in his own chamber, he fixed his mind on the Jewish prayer. This zealot, in fine, asserted that every true Jew was bound to sacrifice his own life and that of his children rather than embrace the faith of Islam, even externally. His theory rested on the assumption that Mahometanism is nothing more nor less than idolatry, for in Mecca, the holy city of the Mahometans, an idol was worshipped in the Temple of the Kaaba. If Islam is so reprehensible—so continued

the zealot, whose name has not come down to us—then the Talmudical precept, that every Jew was to suffer martyrdom rather than be forced to idolatry, would apply to that creed, and he who in such circumstances shrank from death, was to be considered as an apostate.

This document appears to have produced considerable excitement among the secret Jews in Africa. The conscientious felt themselves crushed down by a burden of sin, the multitude became still more uncertain whether they should not secede to Islam altogether, since, however strictly they observed the ordinances of their religion, they were still charged with being idolaters, and leading a sinful life, for which they were to expect no pardon.

Moses Maimuni, who felt the whole weight of the accusation against himself and his brethren in suffering, and was apprehensive of evil consequences, thought that it behoved him to write a letter in refutation of the arguments of their assailant, and to justify the conduct of the pseudo-Mahometans. It was a first step to publicity, but this maiden effort already bore the impress of his clear, comprehensive mind, which mastered the subject in all its aspects. He argued from new points of view, which were opposed to those of the zealot, and the whole letter was so striking that it brought conviction to all minds. Maimuni in this vindication, which he wrote in Arabic that all men might be able to read it, took up a Talmudical standpoint, equally with the zealot, but he proved contrary results from the very passages adduced by his adversary.

He first of all showed that partial transgression of the duties of Judaism was not absolute departure from it. The idolatrous Israelites in the times of the prophets were always considered as members of the people of the Lord. Meïr, a highly esteemed doctor of the Mishna, had feigned

heathenism during a time of persecution, and when put to the test, confessed that he had eaten forbidden food. "We, however," continues Maimuni, "in no wise pay homage to heathenism by our actions, but only repeat an empty formula, which the Mahometans themselves know is not uttered by us in sincerity, but only from a wish to circumvent the bigoted ruler." Then he enters deeper into the matter. The Talmud ordains that all Jews should suffer martyrdom rather than let themselves be compelled to commit three capital sins—idolatry, unchastity, and murder. It was indeed considered the highest merit in the eyes of religion to suffer death rather than violate any commandment of the Law, so as to keep the name of God holy. But he who does not possess the resolution of a martyr, even in regard to submitting to the three capital sins, still does not render himself liable to any punishment from the side of his religion, and moreover is in no wise regarded as a transgressor of the Law. For in the case of compulsion, the Torah has revoked all obligations. He, then, who lacks the courage to sacrifice himself for Judaism has transgressed only one precept, but he still does not belong to those whose testimony has no validity in a law court. Even if any one were, through compulsion, actually to worship an idol, he is by no means exposed to the punishment decreed against idolatry, for how could the involuntary transgressor be compared with the wilful violator of his religion? "Then there is something else to consider," said Maimuni. "We must make a distinction between a transgression that is required to be committed by mere word, and one by deed. The Mahometan authorities by no means demand of Jews a denial of Judaism, but a mere lip utterance of a profession of faith that Mahomet was a prophet, but beyond this they do not offer much objection if the Jews conform to their own laws.

Such a kind of compulsion, where nothing more than a word is demanded, is, in reality, without parallel. He who sacrifices himself as a martyr, rather than acknowledge Mahomet as the messenger of God, certainly performs a most meritorious action. But if a person puts the question whether he is bound to give up his life for his religion, then we must answer him conscientiously according to the precepts of Judaism, 'No.' But we ought to and must advise him to leave a country where such religious coercion prevails. This advice I give also to myself and my friends, to remove to some place where there exists religious freedom. Those, however, who have been compelled to stay, should not consider themselves as excommunicated and banished from their God, but should strive to discharge their religious duties; and we should not despise those who, out of necessity, have been obliged to violate the Sabbath, but must gently admonish them not to forsake the Law. Those are in error who believe that they need not make any preparations for a departure on the ground that the Messiah is soon to appear and redeem them and lead them back to Jerusalem. The coming of the Messiah has nothing to do with religious obligations, from which we can never be released."

This reply of Maimuni, which was in reality an apology for his conduct and that of his friends (written about 1160-64), displays the germs of his original conception of Judaism. Moses Maimuni appears to have zealously endeavoured to induce the Jewish pseudo-Mahometans to remain in their ancient religion; his efforts were directed also against their lukewarmness, and towards urging them to abandon their hypocritical life. On this account he exposed himself to extreme danger, and might have been put to death, if a Mahometan theologian and poet, named Abul-Arab Ibn Moisha, had not interceded for him and saved him. The

feeling of insecurity, together with the smartings of conscience, and the compulsion to publicly deny Judaism, which they held as the most precious treasure of their hearts, induced the family of Maimun to leave Fez and travel to Palestine. In the depth of night they embarked (4th Iyar—18th April, 1165). After they had voyaged for six days on the Mediterranean, there arose a terrible storm, gigantic waves tossed the vessel about like a shuttlecock, and rescue seemed impossible. But the storm abated, and, after a journey of one month, the ship sailed into the harbour of Acco (3rd Sivan—16th May). This day Maimun dedicated as a family festival, for having escaped involuntary apostasy, and the dangers of the sea. The emigrants from Spain were received in a friendly manner by the congregation of Acco. After a residence of nearly half a year in this town, the family travelled amid dangers to Jerusalem, to pray at the ancient site of the Temple (4th Marcheshvan—14th October). The family remained in Jerusalem for three days, then journeyed to Hebron, and from that place to Egypt, which at that time bade fair, through the Ajubides, to become the centre of Islam. Some months after their arrival in Egypt the head of the family died (beginning of 1166). So highly esteemed were both father and son by all who knew them, that letters of consolation were sent to the latter by his friends in Africa and Christian Spain.

On the other hand, in Egypt, in old Cairo (Fostat), where the family of Maimun had settled, Maimuni's name had not as yet become famous. The two brothers lived quietly, carried on together the jewellery trade, but in such a manner that the younger brother took a far more active share, and travelled on business as far as India. Moses Maimuni, on the other hand, devoted himself to study. Severe misfortunes, which would

have brought a mind less strong than his to despair, tore him from this quiet life. Physical sufferings threw him on a bed of sickness; heavy losses diminished his fortune, and informers appeared against him and brought him to the brink of death. Lastly, his brother David perished in the Indian Ocean, and with him not only both their fortunes, but also the money which had been entrusted to them by others for business purposes. These accumulated misfortunes aggravated his sufferings and filled him with melancholy. The death of his brother afflicted him the most. His unbounded trust in God, his enthusiastic love for learning, and his anxiety for his family, and for the widow and daughters of his brother, roused his courage once more, and moved him to enter on an active life. Maimuni appears from this time to have gained a livelihood by the practice of medicine. Nevertheless, as he was still unknown, his practice at first did not prove very lucrative. About this time he also gave public lectures on philosophical subjects. His whole mind, however, was bent on the completion of the gigantic work with which he had been occupied since his twenty-third year, whilst roaming about in Mahometan disguises, on sea voyages, and in the midst of numerous adversities. He finished this his first great work in the year 1168, in Arabic, under the title of "Siraj" ("The Light"). The object of this work was to facilitate the study of the Talmud, which had become difficult through its diffuse discussions, through the interpolated explanations of the Geonim, and through the commentaries of his predecessors, which were not always pertinent to the subject; to determine the right practice (Halacha) from the confusion of diverse arguments, and to define his position by short but weighty explanations of words and things.

Maimuni's commentary on the Mishna arose out

of the author's mental organization, which ever strove after clearness, method, and symmetry. It was the first scientific treatment of the Talmud, which only so clear and systematic a thinker as Maimuni could originate, for the construction of the Talmud seems to be directly opposed to an orderly arrangement. The luminous introduction to the commentary especially gives evidence of its scientific character. He there reveals profound command over the material, as well as a logical conception in the arrangement.

Maimuni treated, with special predilection, those points of the Mishna which have a scientific colouring, and in which the principles of mathematics, astronomy, physics, anatomy, ethics and philosophy could be introduced. Here he was in his element. In such parts he could show that the doctors of the Mishna, the upholders of tradition, knew science also, and based their works upon it. Especially did he aim at establishing that the Mishna contains a sound ethic and a deep philosophical conception of God. To this end he turned his attention with particular interest and thoroughness to the Agadic elements in the Mishna, which till then had been little or only occasionally noticed. He further explained the nature of tradition, maintaining that not all that is contained in the Mishna is tradition. For a traditional doctrine must be positive, and ought not to be open to doubt or uncertainty. Unconsciously Maimuni by this theory put himself in opposition to the Talmud and undermined its firm position.

The tractate of the Mishna, which combines, like a string of pearls, the sayings of the fathers (Aboth), appeared in the eyes of Maimuni a veritable treasure. In explaining these he could display the whole wealth of his world of thought, and he thus saturated Talmudical Judaism with philosophical ideas. But he did not perceive that he would

thereby land himself in self-delusion. It was important for the future that Maimuni having escaped from his unconscious self-deception, undertook for the first time to develop a Jewish system of belief. Since Judaism, according to his views, was nothing more than revealed philosophy, it ought to dominate the beliefs and opinions of men as well as their religious and moral conduct; ay, the one more than the other, as morality has no value in itself, and is only the fruit of right knowledge. He, accordingly, assumed as certain and positive that Judaism defines for us not only what we must do, but what we must believe; that it asserts certain ideas as irrefragable truth. Maimonides drew up thirteen of such doctrines or articles of belief:—The belief in the existence of God; in His indivisible unity; in His incorporeality and insusceptibility of change; in His eternity and existence before the world; in His absolute claim to our adoration (Monotheism); in the prophetic inspiration of chosen men; in Moses being the greatest prophet, with whom no other prophet could be compared; in the divinity of the Torah; in its unalterability; in God's providence; in His just reward and punishment; in the future appearance of the Messiah; and, finally, in the future resurrection. Although these articles of faith rest on investigation, and therefore cannot claim unquestioning acceptance, yet, according to Maimuni, no one can be considered a true Israelite or Jew who does not acknowledge them all as true; he who denies a single one of them is a heretic (*Min*, *Epicoros*), he does not belong to the community of Judaism, and cuts himself off from the hope of future bliss.

Maimuni thus, on the one hand, raised the Jewish creed to the height of reasoned knowledge, and, on the other, set bounds to the free development of thought. Hitherto religious action only was valued as the characteristic of Jewish life. Maimuni now

called after the bold thinker a commanding "halt"; marked the boundary line between belief and heresy, not in the firm province of religious practice, but in the loose ground of religious belief, and brought the ethereal element of thought under rigid formulæ.

Great as the work of Maimuni in the Mishna Commentary undoubtedly is, although he applied to it infinite learning, wealth of intellect, and systematic arrangement, nevertheless he by no means obtained a reputation corresponding to its merit. The reason of this was that among the Jews of Egypt and the East, to whom the work, being in Arabic, was most of all accessible, there was but the faintest understanding of a scientific treatment. The great work was at first scarcely noticed in the East. His pupils, to whom he gave lectures on the same plan, and who revered him as the incarnation of wisdom, spread his reputation abroad. One of his earliest disciples, Solomon Cohen, who travelled to South Arabia (Yemen), was full of his praise, and impressed on the congregation there that, in the time of need, they should apply to Maimuni for consolation and support.

In Egypt far-reaching changes had crept in, which produced a favourable turn in the fortunes of the Jews of that empire and the neighbouring countries. The Fatimide Caliph died or was deposed, and the great Saladin, the model of royal magnanimity and chivalry in that barbarous age, succeeded to the Government (September, 1171). The first office that the celebrated Ajubide held was that of Vice-Field-Marshal of Nureddin; gradually he acquired absolute supremacy over Egypt and a part of Palestine, Syria, and even the districts about the Euphrates, and the Caliphate of Bagdad obeyed his rule. His empire became a safe asylum to the oppressed Jews. Saladin behaved justly towards the Jews, as indeed he did towards

everyone, even his bitterest enemies. Under him the Jews rose to great prosperity and consequence.

At first the fall of the Fatimide Caliphate, and the subjection of the surrounding countries belonging to it, under the Abbasidan and Fatimide Caliphs of Bagdad, let loose a fanaticism which was felt, among others, by the Jewish congregations of Yemen. In that place two Shiites had seized upon the government, and they compelled the Jews to embrace Islam under threat of heavy penalties. Here also, as in Africa and South Spain, the Jews outwardly pretended to adopt the Mahometan religion, (about 1172). But as the grossest ignorance prevailed among them, there was a danger that the unthinking multitude would proceed from pretence to reality, and fall away from Judaism altogether. This fear received some ground when a Jewish apostate preached to the congregation that Mahomet is mentioned in the Torah, and that Islam was a new divinely announced revelation, which was intended to supersede Judaism. In addition, just about this time, there appeared a Jewish enthusiast in Yemen, who proclaimed himself to be the forerunner of the Messiah, endeavoured to instil in the Jews the belief that their affliction was the harbinger of the speedy approach of the Messianic empire, and bade them hold themselves in readiness for that event, and divide their property with the poor. This enthusiasm, to which many clung as drowning men to a straw, threatened to bring the direst misfortune on the heads of the Yemen Jews. The pious abandoned themselves to despair in the contemplation of these proceedings, altogether lost their heads, and knew not what plan they should adopt. At this point Jacob Alfayumi, the most learned and most respected man among them, turned to Maimuni, of whom he had heard through his disciples, for counsel and consolation, described to him their suffer-

ings and apprehensions, and begged him to send a reply.

Maimuni accordingly sent a letter of consolation, in Arabic, to the congregation of Yemen, directed personally to his correspondent, but having reference to all the members (*Iggeret Teman*). In spite of its small compass, it contains valuable matter, and bears witness to the writer's lofty soul and spiritual refinement. He sought in it to elevate the sufferers to the height of spiritual consciousness, through which suffering for religion's sake loses its sting, and darkness appears as an inevitable antecedent to the break of light. He expressed himself on the relation of Judaism to Christianity and Islam with an acuteness and precision which reflects his profound conviction. It was certainly sad to reflect, remarks the sage of Cairo, that there should have occurred cruel persecutions of the Jews in two opposite directions; in the West from the side of the Almohades, and in the East from the side of the Mahometans of Yemen. Nevertheless they were not unexpected, for the prophets had announced them already quite distinctly. "Because God has specially distinguished us, sons of Israel, through His grace, and has appointed us the upholders of the true religion and the true creed, the nations hate us, not only on our own account, but on account of the divinity which lives in our midst, in order to thwart in some measure the divine will." Since the revelation on Sinai there had never been a time when Judaism and its professors had not been exposed to sufferings and persecutions. The nations had manifested their hate in three different forms; either with the sword, like Amalek, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Titus, and Hadrian, in order to utterly root out from the earth the nation that possessed the truth; or with the false tricks of sophistical persuasion, like the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, with a view to refute and falsify

the doctrines of Judaism; or finally under the mask of revelation, partly in the costume of Judaism, in order to juggle it away into disappearance. The principle inimical to Judaism had at length discovered that it was unable to annihilate the upholders of God's religion, or to tear it out of their hearts; and now it thought to destroy them by a crafty device. It pretended also to have received a revelation acknowledging the Sinaitic one to have been authorised for a time, but declared that it now had no further validity. This hostile principle, which sprang from the banishment of everything divine from the earth, sought to substitute a mere spurious body for a godly child, and to adulterate Judaism. The new revelations of Nazareth and Mecca compared to Judaism, were extremely like well-executed statues of a man when compared with a real man, full of life and energy. All this bitter enmity of the nations of the earth against Israel and its divine religion, had been foreseen by the Prophets, and especially by Daniel, who at the same time foretold the victory of Judaism over superstition. "And now, brethren," so Maimuni addressed the congregation of Yemen in his letter, "consider well these truths, and do not let yourselves be discouraged by the superabundance of your woe. Its purpose is to test you, and to show that the posterity of Jacob, the descendants of those who received the Law on Sinai, are in possession of the true Law. It is wrong to calculate the Messianic period, as the Yemen enthusiast thinks he has succeeded in doing; for it can never be exactly determined, it having been purposely concealed as a deep secret by the prophets."

Lastly, Maimuni exhorted Jacob Alfayumi to circulate his letter among the congregations of Yemen, that it might strengthen them in their faith. Great precautions were to be taken when reading it that no traitor might be given the opportunity of

making it an object of accusation. He himself, said Maimuni, wrote in anxiety as to the evil consequences which it might cause him; but he considered that he who wished to work for the general good must not be deterred by apprehensions of danger. This interesting letter of consolation, which was written with much warmth, made so favourable an impression on the Jews of South Arabia, that they, far from growing indifferent to their religion, were strengthened in it, and were moved to take an energetic share in all the proceedings of the whole Jewish community. In later times, when Maimuni attained greater importance, he found the means of putting a stop to the political oppression and bigoted persecution suffered by the Jews. For this the congregation of Yemen clove to him with enthusiastic love and veneration. They included his name in their daily prayer, a demonstration of honour which was formerly only accorded to the Exilarchs when in their zenith.

Maimuni's greatness only obtained gradual acknowledgment. In the year 1175 already he was looked upon as an authority in determining Rabbinical laws; and religious-legal questions were addressed to him from all parts, a circumstance from which we may infer the universal recognition of his authority. Maimuni appears to have been officially recognised in 1177 as Rabbi of Cairo, on account of his profound knowledge of the Talmud, his character, and fame. He formed an ecclesiastical board with nine colleagues. This office he regarded as a holy priesthood, and exercised it with characteristic conscientiousness and circumspection. Where he perceived any abuses, he placed himself boldly in the breach. Although Maimuni worked hard in eliminating from the Rabbinical world all Karaite customs which had crept in, he, nevertheless, always showed great tolerance to the followers of Anan. Being asked how Rabbanites

should behave towards Karaites, he replied that as long as they kept within the bounds of decency, and did not scoff at the Talmud, they were to be treated respectfully, and to be approached with friendliness, humility, and in a pacific spirit. Rabbanites might visit them in their houses, bury their dead, comfort their mourners, and initiate their children into the covenant of Abraham. The Talmud enjoins that we must observe a friendly demeanour towards heathens and idolaters, how much more so towards those who spring from the seed of Jacob, and acknowledge one only God. By virtue of his office Maimuni tried hard to secure decorum in synagogue, and also to remove many long-continued abuses. He noticed, for instance, that when the congregation had finished saying the prayer in silence, thinking that they had performed their duty, they did not listen to its audible repetition by the reader, but chattered to one another, and generally behaved in an unbecoming manner, so that the Mahometans had occasion to mock at them, and with justice too, for they were accustomed to conduct their own divine service with concentrated devotion. Maimuni, who always felt deeply mortified when Judaism was exposed to ridicule, was anxious to put a stop to such offensive behaviour in the synagogues, and with this motive abrogated the silent prayer altogether, without considering that it is expressly prescribed by the Talmud. Prayer properly directed was to him of higher importance than mere mechanical fulfilment of precept. This practice, instituted by Maimuni, of the reader alone saying the chief prayer, was at a later date followed, not only in the whole of Egypt, but even in several congregations of Palestine, in Damascus, and Haleb, and was continued among the native congregations for three centuries.

In the midst of his energetic activity in communal affairs, practising as a physician, and devoting him-

self to the constant study of philosophy and science, Maimuni completed his second great work (8 Kislev — 7 November, 1180), his epoch-making "Mishne-Torah," or Religious Code. If, as he states, he laboured at it continuously for ten successive years, the time stands in no relation to the magnitude of the performance. It is impossible to give the uninitiated an idea of this gigantic work, in which he collected the most remote things from the immeasurable mine of the Talmud; with what labour he extracted the solid from the dross; classified all details under their appropriate heads; showed how the Talmud was based on the Bible, brought the details under general rules, and combined apparently unconnected parts into one organised whole, and cemented it into a work of art. He justly laid special emphasis, in the Mishne-Torah, on the necessity of artistic grouping, of which the difficulties can only be estimated by a specialist deeply versed in the subject. If the Talmud resembles a Dædalian maze, in which one can scarcely find his way even with the thread of Ariadne, Maimuni designed a well-contrived ground-plan, with wings, halls, apartments, chambers, and closets, through which a stranger might easily pass without a guide, and thereby obtain a survey of all that is contained in the Talmud. Only a mind accustomed to think clearly and systematically, and filled with the genius of order, could have planned it out.

Apart from the technical excellences, and the incomparably well-proportioned architecture, the work had, as far as the contents are concerned, a most important influence on the development of Jewish history. All the various lines which his predecessors had partially traced out on the ground of Judaism, Maimuni united in the greatest harmony. Nothing therein is superfluous, nothing wanting. The philosophical, the ethical and ceremonial sides, and, so

to speak, the emotional side of Judaism which the aspiration for a Messianic period of redemption expresses, are treated in this book, and raised to a just position. Maimuni united the divergent roads in which Judaism had been conducted, and made them meet together in one point. He worked out to final perfection all the aims which, since Saadiah tried to bring Judaism nearer to consciousness, and master its philosophical import, had been embodied in writing. His work was the necessary centre of gravity to the tremendous intellectual structure of three centuries.

It might almost be said that Maimuni created a new Talmud. The old elements are certainly there; we know their source, their occurrence, and their original application, but under his treatment, grouping, and elaboration they assume a new shape. The rust is removed, the confusing non-essential matter is taken out, and everything appears newly cast, polished, fresh, and original. The Mishna, the groundwork of the Talmud, begins with a question on the Law, "From what time is the portion of Shema to be said in the evening?" and concludes with a discussion as to what things are unclean according to Levitical law. Maimuni on the other hand thus commences his Talmudical Code, "The foundation and pillar of all wisdom is to recognise that there is an original Being, who called all creatures into existence," and ends with the words, "The earth will at last be as full of knowledge as the water covers the bottom of the sea." There breathes in this work the spirit of true wisdom, calm reflection, and deep morality. Maimuni, so to speak, talmudised Philosophy and philosophised the Talmud. He admitted philosophy into his religious Code, and conceded it a place of importance next to the Halacha. From the time of Philo till Abraham Ibn Daud, philosophy was always treated as some-

thing secondary, which had nothing to do with practical Judaism, as it is daily and hourly carried out. Maimuni, on the other hand, introduced it into the holiest place in Judaism, and as it were gave Aristotle a place next to the doctors of the Law. A great portion of the first book of his work (Sepher Madda) is of a philosophical character. The object of his book was to simplify the knowledge of the whole of Judaism, both Biblical and Talmudical, which in his judgment were of equal value. He wanted to diminish, if not to abolish altogether, the diffuseness and obscurity, which through the Talmudical form of language, the discussions, the incomplete explanations which the Geonim supplied the Talmud, render its study so difficult; to illumine chaos, and bring confusion into order. The Rabbi who had to determine conduct in relation to religious and judicial enactments, the pious man who desired to discharge his religious duty of knowing the Law, the follower of learning who desired to obtain knowledge of the Talmud, had no more need to struggle through the thorn bushes of Halachic discussions, but in addition to the Holy Writ had simply to make himself master of the Code of the Mishne-Torah, in order to acquire complete information. He announced that his work was intended to render the Talmud less necessary, if not to supersede it. For this reason he wrote it in the new-Hebrew language (Mishna idiom), which was easy to understand, so as to make it accessible to all people, and thus spread the knowledge of the Law, and the principles of Judaism generally. It is true that he came into collision with the views of his Rabbinical contemporaries, who expected the Talmud to be treated with the same respect as the Holy Scriptures, in which no word is superfluous, and in whose view a thorough consideration of the Talmud was indispensable.

In consistently carrying out his principle that all details should be brought under comprehensive heads, and that nothing should be admitted without conclusive grounds, Maimuni could not help deviating occasionally in his decisions from the Talmudical method of determining the case, and striking out a path peculiar to himself. In one particular point he stepped beyond the bounds of the Talmud. The Talmud treats as Biblical many decisions which were inferred from verses of Scripture by an application of the Rules of Interpretation. Maimuni, however, advanced the principle of regarding as Scriptural only those laws which the Talmud distinctly claimed to be Biblical, without any difference of opinion on the subject.

In this bold view Maimuni manifestly allowed himself to be guided by the objection of the Karaites against the Oral Law. Without being himself clearly aware of it, he made the concession that a genuine tradition could not be amenable to differences of opinion, and must never, during its transmission from generation to generation, be exposed to doubt.

Although Maimuni's theory, consistently followed out, is calculated to undermine Talmudical Judaism, that Judaism, nevertheless, was in practice held by him in such estimation that he regarded no other thing as of higher importance. The Talmudical sages were, in his eyes, authorities who occupied a position only a step lower than the prophets. He regarded them as ideals, to emulate whom would lead to a virtuous, religious, and perfect life. The legal decisions proceeding from them, whether actual enjoinders or preventive restrictions, might be abrogated only in circumstances specified in the Talmud itself. In practice, accordingly, this difference—whether a law was Biblical or Rabbinical—was of little consequence; both were to be observed with equal conscientiousness.

Maimuni nevertheless, gave Rabbinical Judaism, through his religious Code, a decided check. On the other hand, he also helped to consolidate it. Much in the Talmud that was still unsettled and open to explanation he crystallised into an immoveable law. As he introduced into Judaism articles of Belief, which were to limit thought with thought, so by his codified determinations of the laws, he robbed it of its variability. Without considering the condition of the time in which the Talmudical decisions arose, he laid them down as binding for all times and circumstances. In this respect he was much stricter than the Tossafist school, who took the sting out of a too-burdensome law by proving after elaborate examination that it was not applicable to differently circumstanced times. If Maimuni's Code had acquired absolute supremacy, as it at first seemed likely to do, and had dislodged the Talmud from the schools, the authorised places of reference on religious matters, and from the Jewish courts of law, Talmudical Judaism notwithstanding the material for thought, and the scientific treatment which Maimuni bestowed on it, would in time have become petrified out of existence.

However, as soon as the Jews obtained possession of Maimuni's Code, which was accessible to them by reason of its simple language and arrangement, they began to see clearly its high importance. Every one copied it for himself; the Jewish mind was absorbed in it, young and old gathered together in order to master its contents. There were now many doctors of the Law who could pass an original opinion on any controversial point of Law, and check the decision of the Judge. And as in Spain, so it was in all parts, even in the East, where the study of the Talmud was more energetically pursued. The reverence for the great master increased every day, especially when it transpired

that his private life corresponded with the ideal which he had delineated of a Jewish sage. His people lavished on him the most enthusiastic of praises. "The only one of his time," "The banner of the Rabbis," "The enlightener of the eyes of Israel," were even modest titles. It required all Maimuni's moral force not to be overpowered by the incense scattered on him. Maimuni's name rang from Spain to India, and from the sources of the Euphrates and the Tigris to South Arabia, and eclipsed all contemporary celebrities. The most learned men subordinated themselves to his judgment, solicited his instruction in the most humble manner; he was regarded as chief authority for the whole Jewish community, which revered him as its noblest representative.

Nor did he remain unattacked by puny opponents, who were jealous of his towering greatness; those insignificant Rabbis, who, being familiar with the text of the Talmud, thought themselves in possession of all wisdom, and were unpleasantly awakened from their dream by Maimuni's work. In Cairo itself some Talmudists would not deign to bestow a glance on the Code, lest it might be said that they had learnt something out of it. Others argued that the College of Bagdad was the only seat of Talmudical knowledge. He who was not moulded by this school could not be recognised as thoroughly consecrated; and, consequently, Maimuni's decisions did not deserve implicit acceptance. Such little minds persuaded themselves that it lay in their power to compose an equal or even better work on all the laws of Judaism. The head of this puny opposition was Samuel ben Ali, of Bagdad, who, on his richly garnished Gaonate throne, ever surrounded by his slaves armed with scourges, would not acknowledge anyone equal, much less superior, to himself. Maimonides opposed a contemptuous silence to detrac-

tors of this class. He had, however, also honourable adversaries, who feeling that Maimuni's conception of Talmudical Judaism was not flesh of their flesh, scented heresy in the Code, and perceived danger therein to the old religion. But wherein the strange and inconsistent elements lay only the more learned understood; the simple, on the other hand, fastened on to secondary and quite unessential points, and excited themselves about them, as if the fundamental principles of the religion were in danger.

Thus, in Alexandria, after the publication of Maimuni's work, there broke out against it a popular insurrection, because it was taught therein that bathing before prayer, which the Eastern Jews had adopted from their Mahometan neighbours, was not essential. Members of the congregation combined, and threatened to lay an information against it before the Mahometan authorities, on the ground that those who had adopted Maimuni's Code as law wished to introduce innovations into the religion.

It was only after a residence in Egypt of more than twenty years that Maimuni obtained an appointment as physician at the court of Saladin, whereas till that time he had acquired only a slight connection. He was not, indeed, by any means Saladin's physician in ordinary, for the Sultan, on account of the constant wars with the adherents of Nureddin and with the Christians, could not visit his capital for a long time. But the favour of the noble vizir, the wise and mighty Alfadhel, who was also a great promoter of learning, and of whom a contemporary said, "he was entirely head and heart," was of as much value as distinction on the part of the sovereign. Alfadhel caused Maimuni to be placed on the list of physicians, settled upon him a yearly salary, and loaded him with favours. Inspired by his example, the great men of the country who lived

in Cairo likewise bestowed upon him their patronage, so that Maimuni's time was so fully occupied that he was obliged to neglect his studies. Maimuni was indebted for his elevation more to his medical learning than to his originality as a physician; for he pursued this profession as a learned science, and prescribed no recipe for whose efficacy he could not vouch the judgment of medical authorities. He treated the facts of scientific medicine in the same spirit as he had shown in considering the Talmud. In this manner he elaborated the writings of the medical oracle in the Middle Ages — Galen; he abridged and arranged them, without allowing himself the least variation. The same character is borne also by his medical aphorisms, which contain nothing further than extracts and classifications of older theories. In spite of his almost absolute lack of originality in the province of medicine, Maimuni nevertheless enjoyed a wide reputation as a medical author. The celebrated Mahometan physician and theologian, Abdel-latif, of Bagdad, who enjoyed the favour of Saladin in a high degree, confessed that his wish to visit Cairo was prompted by the desire to make the acquaintance there of three men, among whom was Musa ben Maimun. The poet and kadhi, Alsaïd Ibn Sina Almulk, sang of Maimuni's greatness as a doctor in ecstatic verse :—

“Galen's art heals only the body,
But Abu-Amran's (Maimuni's) the body and soul.
He could heal with his wisdom the sickness of ignorance.
If the moon would submit to his art,
He would deliver her of her spots at the time of full moon,
Complete for her, her periodic defects,
And at the time of her conjunction restore her from her
waning.”

Maimuni's reputation was so great that the English king, Richard Cœur de Lion, the soul of the third Crusade, wanted to appoint him his

physician in ordinary, but Maimuni refused the offer.

His patron, the chief Judge and Vizir Alfadhel, also acquitted him about this time of a grave charge, for which under a less mild Mahometan, or even Christian judge, he would have incurred the penalty of death. The same Abulalarab Ibn Moïsha, who had supported Maimuni in Fez, had come from Maghreb to Egypt, and when he saw Maimuni, whom he had known as a Mahometan, now at the head of the Jewish community as spiritual chief, he appeared against him as an accuser, and averred that Maimuni had for a long time professed the religion of Islam, and consequently ought to be punished as a renegade. Alfadhel, before whose tribunal the accusation was preferred, decided rightly that the compulsory adoption of a creed could have no value, and therefore could involve no penalties (about 1187). In consequence of his favour with the vizir, Maimuni was appointed supreme head of all the Egyptian congregations, and this honour descended in his family from father to son and grandson. It is certain that Maimuni drew no salary for this office, for nothing appeared to him more discreditable and sinful than to receive payment for the discharge of spiritual duties, or to degrade knowledge into a money-making business. He sought this prominent position not for himself, but for the sake of his co-religionists, in order to avert injustice from them. It was through his means that the heavy yoke of persecution was removed from the congregation of Yemen. When Saladin had once more wrested Jerusalem from the hands of the Christians, who had held it in their possession for nearly a century, he allowed the Jews to settle in the city of their fathers (October, 1187). And from all sides there streamed once more ardent sons to visit their mourning and

forsaken mother. Possibly Maimuni was not unconnected with this act of noble-minded tolerance. Lastly, he endeavoured to obtain for his brethren in faith precedence in the State over the Karaites, and gradually to oust the latter out of their favourable position at court, so that many of them reverted to Rabbanism. This was accounted to Maimuni in his time as a most meritorious service.

The higher Maimuni advanced in the esteem of his contemporaries, the more his extraordinary individuality was acknowledged, and the louder his fame resounded, the more did the arrogant Samuel ben Ali, of Bagdad, feel himself damaged in his authority, and the more did he become filled with envy. Samuel accordingly took every opportunity to depreciate Maimuni's merit, and to rob him of his fame. Samuel and his friends whispered to one another that Maimuni was not by any means a strictly religious Jew, nor a true follower of the Talmud, and they spread many lying calumnies about him. Some mistakes which he had made in his youthful work, the Mishna Commentary, were utilised by these malevolent people with a view to brand him as ignorant of the Talmud, and without claim to authority in this province. Their idea of religion, as Maimuni characterised it, consisted in guarding against the violation of precepts; but according to the view of this class of people, good morals, humility, in short, merely human virtues, do not belong to religion. As the seed which Maimuni had scattered began to bear fruit, Samuel ben Ali and his allies used these results in order to lower their producer in the eyes of his contemporaries.

In Damascus and Yemen there appeared religious teachers, who drew from Maimuni's writings logical conclusions which he himself would not have allowed. As he strongly affirmed and repeatedly insisted, that by the immortality of the soul a purely spiritual existence in another world was to

be understood, whereas he passed over the resurrection of the dead as of only secondary importance, his disciples concluded that he was not thoroughly convinced of the resurrection, and forthwith began to teach that after death the body sinks into dissolution and decay, and that only the soul becomes elevated to a purely spiritual life. This liberal view clashed with explicit declarations in the Talmud and consequently aroused general opposition. Samuel ben Ali was requested by some one in Yemen to give his opinion on this question of the belief in the resurrection. Samuel wrote a whole treatise upon it, furnished it with philosophical flourishes in order to appear a worthy rival of Maimuni, and seized the opportunity of passing strictures upon his writings, the effect of which he thought to heighten by according partial praise to Maimuni. On another occasion Samuel ben Ali directed a letter to Maimuni, in which, amid much flattery and fawning, he reproached him with having committed an error in interpreting the Talmud which could scarcely have been perpetrated by a beginner, kindly adding that Maimuni must not fret himself about it. At the same time, he did not forget to graciously promise to take him under his protection against the congregation in Yemen. Maimuni replied with a heated letter, in which he showed his malicious opponent that it was he who had erred in the deeper conception of the Talmud. He also touched upon the secret attacks made against his great work from this quarter, in which it was asserted by some that the book contained mistakes, by others that it was superfluous, by others again that it was dangerous. "You seem," Maimuni observed to him, "to reckon me among those who are sensitive to every word of blame. You make a mistake. God has protected me against this weakness, and I protest to you in his name that if the most insignificant scholar, whether friend or foe, would

point out to me an error, I would be grateful for the correction and instruction.” Although Samuel ben Ali was readily refuted by Maimuni, he still continued to spread the report that the latter was no Talmudist, and that his Codex did not deserve the respect which it enjoyed. From another side, from Haleb, Mar Sacharya, a man of limited range of vision, and with a superficial knowledge of the Talmud, thinking himself eclipsed by Maimuni’s pupil, Joseph Ibn Aknin, worked with equal hostility against master and disciple. But, as the sage of Fostat had warm and disinterested adherents everywhere, Samuel ben Ali and his ally of Haleb were constrained to act cautiously. They organised an intrigue against him, into which they drew one of the two Exilarchs. Towards this cabal, Maimuni assumed an attitude of contemptuous indifference and unconcern, which altogether disarmed his opponents.

In spite of his collisions with the party of Samuel ben Ali, and his prodigious activity as a physician, which scarcely gave him time for study, he completed his religious philosophical work, “Guide to the Perplexed” (*Moréh Nebuchim*, *Dalalat al Haïrin*) about 1190. This treatise became of extraordinary importance, not only for Judaism, but for the history of philosophy in the Middle Ages generally. Maimuni appears at the summit of his intellectual power in this work, and it contains the vindication of his profoundest convictions. The questions which the human mind starts ever anew, about the existence of a higher world, the destiny of our being, and the imperfection and evil of the earthly world, Maimuni sought to answer in a manner which was at that time considered convincing. The doubts which, to the thinking Jew, clash with the truth of his hereditary religion, he endeavoured to remove in a persuasive manner. He, whose thoughts were ever directed to the loftiest subjects, could

with justice assume the character of Guide to the perplexed and wavering. The external form of this epoch-making work makes it appear as though the author elaborated for his favourite pupil, Joseph Ibn Aknin of Fez, separate treatises on important points which had disquieted and tortured the latter. But it was dictated by the desire to express clearly his philosophical conception of the world, and his views of the place which Judaism finds in it, and thoroughly to analyse their mutual relation.

Maimuni was on the one hand firmly convinced of the truth of the Aristotelian philosophy, as the Mahometan philosopher Ibn Sina and others had extended it. On the other hand, Judaism was to him a body of truths not less irrefragable. Both seemed to him to have the same conclusion and a common aim. Philosophy recognised as the principal of all essences one indivisible God as the disposer of the world. Judaism likewise teaches with emphatic asseveration the unity of God, and abhors nothing more thoroughly than polytheism. Metaphysics know no higher aim for a man than that he should perfect himself intellectually, and work his way up to the highest knowledge. Judaism also, even Talmudical Judaism, places understanding and knowledge, the understanding of God, at the head of its precepts. If the truth which the human mind in the fulness of its power evolves from itself, and the Revelation which the Deity vouchsafed to the Israelite nation on Sinai, resemble one another in beginning and end, then their separate parts must correspond with one another, and be to one another as one and the same truth, arrived at in different ways. Judaism cannot be in contradiction with philosophy, as both are emanations from the divine spirit. The truth, which God has revealed, must also agree with that which lies in the human reason, since the latter is a power

originating from God, and similarly all truths which metaphysical thinking can bring to light must exist in the Revelation—that is, in Judaism. Hence Maimuni believed that originally, besides the written Revelation in the Pentateuch, there were also communicated to the greatest of prophets oral doctrines of a philosophical character, which were transmitted by tradition to posterity, and which were lost only in consequence of the troubles and afflictions which the Israelites experienced in the course of ages. Traces of this old Israelite wisdom are found, according to Maimuni, in the scattered utterances of the prophets, and in the reflections of the Agada. When then the thinking Jew borrows the truths of Greek philosophy, and adopts the theories of Plato and Aristotle, they are not altogether strange elements to him, but only the means to remind himself of his own forgotten treasure.

The whole universe, which must be considered as a single organic entity, consisting of spheres suspended over one another working in harmony, is nothing more than the realised thought of God, or rather than the idea of God ever tending to realisation. He continually imparts to it new forms and shapes, and implants order and regularity in the world. Everything is arranged therein in accordance with an end. The Greek philosophy, it is true, assumes that the universe shares in the eternity of God; but it can neither irrefutably prove the eternity of the world, nor remove any of the difficulties which oppose the acceptation of the original existence of the universe. The doctrine of Judaism is much more reasonable, that the world had a positive beginning, and that time itself, which is rather a form of the world and its motion, is not without beginning, but was called into being by the determining will of God.

The organically formed universe, created and made to cohere by God, consists of a series of entities of different degrees. Next to the Deity are the pure spirits, which are simple, and not composed of matter and form, but consequently partake the most of the divine nature. Their necessary existence is proved philosophically, because many phenomena in the universe admit of explanation best through them. These pure spirits, these "forms free of matter," Judaism and Holy Writ calls "Angels." Among them must be assumed a spirit or angel, who is the originator of thoughts or ideas,—the active world-spirit or the creative reason (*Sechel ha-Poel*).

In the degree next to the pure spirits are entities which must certainly be considered as composed of matter and form, whose matter, however, is not heavy and coarse, but of an ethereal nature. These ethereal entities are the heavens and the brilliant world of stars, which possess an ever uniform motion, and are therefore not subject to the change of genesis and dissolution, but revolve in the firmament in constant brightness and with unbroken regularity. They form and change the circle of the lower entities into four spheres—into the sphere of the fixed stars, of the moving stars (planets), of the sun and the moon. These spheres must be considered as endowed with life and intellectual power. Below the sphere of the moon there exists a grade of entities which are generated from coarser matter, but are susceptible of form, shape, and motion. This is the world of the four elements, which are in their turn fashioned into four spheres, one above the other. Within these spheres are formed, through manifold evolutions, excited by the world of stars, lifeless minerals, plants, self-moving animals, and men capable of intelligence.

But how is the influence of God upon this multiformed universe to be understood? The

changes cannot proceed immediately through Him. The animated orbs of stars, which are the cause of all transformations on earth, are not set in motion by God, but are impelled towards Him in longing and love, in order to partake of His perfection, His light, and His goodness. Through this ardent striving of the heavenly bodies to God comes their regular revolution, and in this manner they cause all changes in the world below the moon, in the circle of genesis and dissolution, through the reception and loss of peculiar forms and shapes. This theory of God, of the universe, and the various motions of the degrees of entities, Maimuni found indicated in Holy Writ and in many utterances of the Agada, but only in obscure allusions, as these writings being designed for everyone, and not solely for the philosopher, could not and durst not unveil the complete image of truth, except at the risk of occasioning gross misunderstanding.

More important than the analysis of this conception of the world is Maimuni's development of his ideas on matters more nearly concerning mankind. Since God, the Creator of the world, is perfect and all-good, the world cannot have been made otherwise than good, and in accordance with an end. "God saw that all was good," "From on high there comes no evil." The evils which exist in the world are not to be looked upon as the work of God, but merely as the absence of the good and perfect, since gross matter is incapable of partaking of the good and the divine. God did not create sin, but sin arises from the nature of the coarse matter, which is defective in its constitution, and which can only receive and retain defectively what is good. But this evil must be overcome. God has implanted in the soul of man, who is superior to all entities composed of gross matter, the capacity and instinct for knowledge. If the

soul follows this instinct, it is met by the active reason which has been specially created for that purpose, and this active reason opens up to the soul the source of the divine spirit, in order that it may perceive the cohesion of the world and God's influence upon it, and have the power of leading a worthy life. Man can thereby raise himself to the higher degree of the angels, and can conquer the frailties which spring from his material body. Through this elevation to the higher abode of thought, and to moral purity, if he does not permit himself to be mastered by his animal nature, man by his own will acquires for himself a soul, he makes himself a super-earthly being, he wins for himself the immortality of the soul, and becomes united with the all-governing world-soul. The possibility to gain this highest degree is vouchsafed to man with his freedom of will.

And man can acquire and in a manner win God's special providence in the same way as he can acquire and win immortality through the action of his soul. For God's care extends only to what remains and endures. Even in the lower world of the four elements, this is felt in the preservation of the species, which by reason of their form and purpose are of a spiritual nature. If man raises himself to the degree of the spirit he becomes master over matter, and the providential eye of God will not pass him over. And if man can gain for himself, through moral and intellectual discipline, the highest reward in the acquisition of an undying soul, he also incurs the highest penalty if his spiritual light is quenched through a sinful life, and becomes consumed into matter.

Man has the power of acquiring still more; he can through an ideal life come to possess the prophetic faculty, if he opens his mind by constant communion with God to the influences of the active reason. To the acquisition of prophecy

there specially belongs on the part of man cultivation and concentration of the imagination, and on the part of God the emanation of His spirit. Since a lively predominating imagination is the chief qualification for prophecy, it can develop itself simply in a state similar to a dream, when the disturbing activity of the senses is relaxed, and the mind becomes free to resign itself to the influences from above. The prophecy of the prophets always proceeds like a kind of dream. Whole narratives, which Scripture tells of the actions and experiences of the prophets during their ecstatic condition, are not to be understood as actual occurrences, but only as inner proceedings of the soul, as visions of the imagination. There are also different degrees of prophecy, according to the greater or lesser capacity which is requisite for them. Thus, many miraculous tales in the Bible cease to appear supernatural and surprising, just as the hyperbolical style of the prophets is explicable on this theory. It is certainly not contrary to possibility to assume miracles. The same Creator who has established the laws of Nature can also suspend them, but He does so only temporarily, that the old order may soon return, as when the waters of the Nile were changed into blood only for a short time, and the sea divided itself for the Israelites but for a few hours. The number of miracles in the Bible is necessarily limited. Wonders are not, generally speaking, the means of verifying and confirming the declarations of the prophets; the latter must be proved from the substance of prophecies, and the fulfilment of predictions and miracles alone cannot perform this function.

The most perfect of all prophets was that man of God with shining countenance, who brought to the world a religion which has exercised the profoundest sway over men's minds. The prophecy of Moses differed from that of later prophets in four

essential points. He received the revelation without the mediation of another spiritual being, that is, without the influence of the active reason in the shape of an angel, but communed with the Deity "face to face and mouth to mouth." Secondly, Moses communed with God, not in a dream, when all activity of the senses ceases, but the higher teaching was granted to him whilst he was in an ordinary frame of mind. Moreover, his being was not extinguished or dissolved by it, as in the case of other prophets when the Spirit of God came upon them, but he could support himself under it. Finally, Moses was continually in the prophetic vein, whereas this power used to come upon other men of God only after longer or shorter intervals, and then only after careful preparation. Moses possessed this prophetic perfection only because, through the elevation of his mind, he had liberated himself from the tyranny of his senses, from desire, and even from his imagination, and had won for himself the degree of an angel, or of a pure spirit. All coverings which blindfold the eye of the human mind and disturb its view he tore off, and penetrated to the fountain-head of truth. He attained to a degree such as no other mortal has reached, and therefore he was able also to recognise the Deity and His will with the undisturbed gaze of a pure spirit. The truth of the highest Being irradiated him without intermediation, and in transparent clearness, without word or speech. That which he perceived at such a height he brought to his people as a religion, as a revelation, and this truth, radiating immediately from the divinity, is the Torah.

This revealed religion, originating from God, is the only existing one that acts as the mediator through which the truth was conveyed to man, and was the only one of its kind. Being a divine doctrine it is perfect, and consequently there can be no

other which could abrogate its authority and supersede it, just as there were no others previous to it.

The divinity of the Torah is proved just as much by its contents as by its origin. It contains not only laws and precepts, but also dogmas upon questions most important for man, and this twofold character is likewise a mark to distinguish it from other codes and from other religions. Besides, the laws of the Torah all aim at a higher purpose, so that there is nothing in it superfluous, nothing unnecessary, nothing gratuitous. The design of the Revelation brought down by Moses can be thus summarised; it was to promote the spiritual and physical welfare of those who received it, the one by inculcating correct ideas of God and His government of the world, the other by enjoining principles of virtue and morality. Maimuni made an attempt to show that the six hundred and thirteen laws of the Torah, or of Judaism, tend to establish a true theory as to the Deity and His relation to the world, to oppose false and generally pernicious opinions, to uproot false but received ideas, to remove wrong and violence, to accustom men to virtue, and finally to eliminate perverted morals and vices. Maimuni arranged all the obligations of Judaism into fourteen groups according to his scheme. Besides these he also recognised a group of religious duties which aim at inculcating a spirit of beneficence and compassion for the poor and helpless.

Maimuni's ideal labour, to raise Judaism to the height of a philosophical system, was of the most extensive scope. For the thinkers of his time, Maimuni's religious philosophy was, indeed, a "Guide to the Perplexed." For to these men, who were dominated by the same principles, whose thinking on the one hand was Aristotelian and whose feeling on the other hand was Jewish, but who, nevertheless were conscious of a deep gulf

between their thinking and feeling, nothing could have been more welcome than the discovery of a bridge which led from the one to the other. Many things which appeared to them offensive, or at least trivial, in the Bible, received through Maimuni's ingenious manner of interpretation a higher importance, a deeper sense, and became clear to their understanding. To posterity his philosophical work was both suggestive and productive of thought. Judaism, viewed in the light of Maimuni's philosophy, no longer appeared to Jewish students as something strange, belonging to the past, extinct and a mere mechanical system, but as something which belonged to themselves, a part of their consciousness, existing in the present, living in their thoughts and animating them. Jewish thinkers of all times after Maimuni have consequently had recourse to Maimuni's "Guide," have derived fruitful ideas from this source, and have even learnt from him to advance beyond his standpoint, and to combat him. And since in the end thinkers will always remain the guides and leaders of men, and the designers of their future, it can be said with justice, that Judaism is indebted to Maimuni for its rejuvenescence. So exclusively did he hold sway over men of intellect, that for a long time his work completely supplanted the systems of his predecessors from Saadiah till Ibn Daud.

Maimuni's philosophical work, being written in Arabic, also exercised considerable influence beyond the Jewish world. He had, it is true, composed it entirely for the Jews and for those who wished to use it, and it is said that he strictly enjoined it should be copied entirely in Hebrew characters, so that it might not fall into the hands of the Mahometans and provoke animosity against his own people. He even cautioned his favourite disciples to use the utmost care in returning him the

volumes, so that they might not be misused by Mahometans and bad Jews; but nevertheless this became known to the Arabians, even in Maimuni's lifetime. A Mahometan wrote a searching explanation of the hypotheses established by Maimuni to prove the existence of God. The chief founders of the Christian scholastic philosophy not only used Maimuni's work, which was translated into Latin at an early period, but for the first time learnt from it how to reconcile the diverging tendencies of belief and philosophy.

It ought scarcely to be urged against Maimnui, as a reproach, that he introduced involved or strange and even incompatible elements into his system; that he erected, instead of the God of Revelation (who is in complete sympathy with the human race, with the Israelite people, and with every individual) a metaphysical entity, who exists in cold seclusion and elevation, and who dares not concern Himself about His creatures, if His existence is not to evaporate in a mere phantasm. To this metaphysical God he could scarcely attribute free-will, and then only in a limited sense, whilst as a complete personality he practically denied him altogether. Judaism, however much Maimuni had its interests at heart, must be a loser by his system. As he could not accept the Revelation of the Torah in the fullest sense as a communication of the Deity to His people, he had to consider the greatest prophet in the light of a demi-god above mankind. The ideal of a perfectly pious man, according to Maimuni's conception, is attainable to very few, and only to disciplined thinkers, who have the power of raising themselves to that rank through the long succession of degrees of lower and higher perceptions, which are not within the scope of every one. A merely moral and religious course of life is not sufficient, since God can be adored only by a soul endowed with philosophical intuition, and

consequently only the few can arrive at immortality and future bliss, and have divine providence vouchsafed them. Thus, according to Maimuni's theory, there are but very few elected. Lastly, Maimuni had to put a forced interpretation on verses of Scripture, in order to make them harmonise with the data of philosophical consciousness, and to attribute to them a new sense.

Maimuni's intelligent contemporaries, and even his favourite pupil, Joseph Ibn Aknin, felt that his theory was not quite consistent with Judaism. This feeling made itself especially noticeable in regard to the belief in the Resurrection. Maimuni certainly accepted it, but only as a secondary consideration. Among his co-religionists he found no support for his treatment of the doctrine. From many sides a good case was made out against him, that he had made an exhaustive examination of the question of immortality, whereas he had passed over the doctrine of Resurrection with little notice. Maimuni now felt that he owed it to himself to compose a Vindication in the form of a Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead which he wrote in Arabic in 1191. Therein he affirms that he firmly believes in the Resurrection as a miracle whose possibility is granted with the assumption of a temporal creation. He complains in the book of being misunderstood. This composition generally is written in a heated tone, which contrasts forcibly with the calmness of his former works. He was annoyed that he had to justify himself to "Fools and Women."

Among the learned Mahometans Maimuni's "Guide" made much stir, but was severely condemned by them. This was natural, partly on account of his covert attacks upon Islam and the barren but orthodox philosophy, which reigned at that time, and partly on account of his broad views. Abdel-latif—the representative of the orthodox ten-

dency in the Eastern-Islamitic world, who had been patronised by Saladin, and had come to Egypt in order to make the acquaintance of Maimuni (very early in 1192)—speaks of him, it is true, with respect, but animadverts strongly upon his work. He expressed himself about him in the following manner:—"Moses, the son of Maimun, visited me, and I found him to be a man of very high merit, but governed by an ambition to take the first place, and to make himself acceptable to men in power. Besides medical works, he has written a philosophical book for the Jews, which I have read; I consider it a bad book, which is calculated to undermine the principles of religion through the very means which are apparently designed to strengthen them."

Nowhere did Maimuni's ideas find a more fruitful ground, and nowhere were they adopted with more readiness than in the Jewish congregations of South France, where prosperity, the free form of government, and the agitation of the Albigenses against austere clericalism, had awakened a taste for scientific investigation, and where Ibn Ezra, the Tibbon and the Kimchi families, had scattered seeds of Jewish culture. The less the men of South France were able of themselves to accommodate Judaism with the results of science, the more did they occupy themselves with the writings of the sage who in such a convincing manner showed that pure and earnest devotion to religion was compatible with a taste for free research, and whose works revealed circumspection, clearness, deliberation, and depth. Not only laymen, but even profound Talmudists, like Jonathan Cohen, of Lünel, idolised him, eagerly watched for every word of his, and paid him homage. "Since the death of the last authority of the Talmud, there has never been such a man in Israel."

Among the rules of health which Maimuni drew

up in reply to the request of Alfadhel, he threw in the observation that the strengthening of the soul through moral living and philosophical reflection was requisite for the preservation of a strong body; that immoderate enjoyment of wine and love destroyed vitality. He had the boldness to say to a wayward prince something which no courtier of the age had the courage to tell him. He was determined not to be unfaithful to his calling as a physician of the soul. As soon as Maimuni obtained rest, he answered certain questions directed to him from Lünel. When he says, in his missive, that his senses were disturbed, his mental power weakened, and his capacities blunted, his answers testify against him, for they display perfect clearness and freshness of mind.

The great veneration which the congregations of South France felt for Maimuni's writings, and especially for his Code, aroused against him a violent antagonist in the person of Abraham ben David, of Posquières, whose inconsiderate manner of dealing with those who represented an opposite line of thought to himself, had been experienced by Serachya Halevi Gerundi. This profound Talmudist subjected Maimuni's *Mishne-Torah* to an unsparing criticism, and treated him in a repellent tone. He maintained that the author had not grasped thoroughly many Talmudical passages, had misconstrued their sense, and had thus drawn many false conclusions. He reproached him for desiring to bring Talmudical authorities into oblivion by reducing the Talmud to a code, and lastly for smuggling philosophical notions into Judaism. But he never treated Maimuni as an innovator and a heretic; on the contrary, he did justice to his point of view and his noble aim. Abraham ben David's strictures (*Hassagot*) upon Maimuni's work gave occasion to the Talmudists of a later time to practise

their hair-splitting acuteness, and gave a great impulse to the taste for disputation. The rich, learned, and narrow-minded Rabbi of Posquières also had his admirers. When he died (Friday, 26th Kislev—27th Nov., 1198), the descendants of Aaron, who are not allowed to enter the cemetery, made his grave, since before such greatness as his, the priesthood might sink its sacred character.

The polemic of Abraham ben David against Maimuni in no way prejudiced the latter's consideration among the congregations of Provence; he remained for them an infallible authority. The chief representative of Jewish-Provençal culture, Samuel Ibn Tibbon, wrote to Maimuni; he was busying himself with the rendering of the "Guide" from Arabic into Hebrew, and he was longing to see the greatest man in the Jewish world face to face. Ibn Tibbon thereby obviated in part a wish of Maimuni's, for the latter already contemplated translating his work into Hebrew. Full of joy he replied to Ibn Tibbon, and gave him some advice how to handle so difficult a theme (8th Tishri—10th September, 1199). He dissuaded him, however, from making the perilous voyage from France to Egypt on his account, as he would scarcely be able to devote to him an hour of his time. He took the occasion of informing him of his own over-worked condition, which allowed him scarcely a moment to rest. "The Sultan (Alfadhel) lives in Cairo, and I in Fostat; the two towns lie at a distance of two Sabbath journeys (about a mile and a third). With the Sultan I have a difficult lot; I must visit him daily in the morning, and when he or any of his children, or one of the women of his harem is suffering, I may not leave Cairo. Even when nothing particular happens I cannot come home till after mid-day. When I enter my house, dying of hunger, I find the hall

thronged with people—Jews, Mahometans, illustrious and otherwise, friends and foes, a motley crowd—who await my advice as a physician. There scarcely remains time for me to alight from my horse, wash myself, and take some refreshment. Thus it continues till night, and then, worn out with weakness, I must retire to bed. Only on Sabbath have I time to occupy myself with the congregation and with religion. I am accustomed on this day to dispose of the affairs of the community for the following week, and to hold a discourse. Thus my days glide away.”

It may be that the congregation of Lünel were not aware that Samuel Ibn Tibbon was engaged with the translation of the “Guide,” or that they did not give him credit for ability in that direction; but, however it was, they applied to Maimuni to translate this work for them into Hebrew. Maimuni pleaded want of time in excuse, and referred them to Ibn Tibbon (about 1200). He seized the opportunity also to exhort the Provençal Jews to grapple with the scientific treatment of the Talmud. “You, members of the congregation of Lünel, and of the neighbouring towns, are the only ones who raise aloft the banner of Moses. You apply yourselves to the study of the Talmud, and also cherish wisdom. But in the East the Jews are dead to spiritual aims. In the whole of Syria none but a few in Haleb occupy themselves with the Torah according to the truth, but even they have it not much at heart. In Irak there are only two or three grapes (men of insight); in Yemen and the rest of Arabia they know little of the Talmud, and are merely acquainted with the Agadic exposition. Only just lately have they purchased copies of my Code, and distributed them among a few circles. The Jews of Judæa know little of the Bible, much less of the Talmud. Those who live among the Turks and Tartars have the Bible only, and live

according to it alone. In Maghreb you know what is the position of the Jews (that they must affect a profession of Islam). Thus it remains to you alone to be a strong support to our religion. Therefore be firm, and of good courage, and be united in it." Maimuni hinted that scientific Judaism would have its chief advocacy in Provence. The congregation of Marseilles requested the poet Charisi to translate Maimuni's Commentary to the Mishna into Hebrew. The Provençals took this great man and his writings as a guide in all their actions.

When Maimuni despatched his last missive to the congregation of Lunel, he already felt the decadence of his powers. "I feel old, not in years, but on account of feebleness." He died from weakness at the age of seventy years (20th Tebet—13th Dec., 1204), deplored by many congregations throughout the whole globe. In Fostat, both Jews and Mahometans publicly mourned for him for three days. In Jerusalem the congregation performed an extraordinary funeral service on his account. A general fast was appointed, and the chapter containing the penalties for breaking God's commandments was read from the Torah, and from the Prophets the story of the capture of the Ark of the Covenant by the Philistines. His earthly frame was conveyed to Tiberias. Maimuni left only one son, Abulmeni Abraham, who inherited his father's character, his mildness, his sincere piety, his medical knowledge, his place as physician in ordinary, his dignity as chief (Nagid) of the Egyptian community, but not his intellect. His descendants, who can be traced till the fifteenth century, were distinguished for their piety and knowledge of the Talmud. On the lips of all his reverers there hovered the brief but suggestive praise: "From Moses the prophet till Moses (Maimuni) there has never appeared his equal."

An unknown person placed on his grave a short and almost idolatrous inscription :

“ Here lies a man, and still no man ;
If thou wert a man, angels of heaven
Must have overshadowed thy mother.”

These lines were afterwards effaced, and the following substituted :

“ Here lies Moses Maimuni, the excommunicated heretic.”

These two inscriptions shadow forth the bitter differences which broke out after Maimuni's death, and divided Judaism into two camps.

CHAPTER XIV.

NEW POSITION OF THE JEWS IN CHRISTIAN LANDS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

Effects of the death of Maimuni—Abraham Maimuni and Joseph Ibn-Aknin—Hostility of the Papacy against the Jews—Pope Innocent III.—The Albigenses—Emigration of Rabbis to Palestine—The Lateran Council and the Jewish Badges—Synod of Rabbis at Mayence—The Dominicans and the rise of the Inquisition—King Jayme of Aragon and his Physician Bachel—Stephen Langton and the Jews of England—Gregory IX. and Louis IX. of France—The Jews of Hungary.

1205—1232 C.E.

IF Maimuni, the most intellectual Rabbi, and the deep religious philosopher, constitutes the zenith in mediæval Jewish history, soon after his death the shadows begin to incline. Gradually the sunshine lessens, and gives way to a dismal gloom. His bequest in suggestive thoughts produced a far-reaching cleavage which divided Judaism, or its leaders, into two hostile camps, and aroused an exhausting spirit of faction which presented weak points to the attacks of deadly foes. The Church, whose arrogance was constantly gaining ground, interfered in the disputes of Judaism, and brought into play against the refractory synagogue seductive allurements, formidable inflictions, secret poison, or blazing fire. Maimuni's death and the ascendancy of the Papacy were two misfortunes for Judaism which removed it from its lofty position to the deepest degradation.

Maimuni's death not only produced a gap and a stand-still in the spiritual aspirations of the Jews, but deprived them of a dignified and mighty leader,

who had been able to bring together under one standard a people scattered all over the universe. To him the congregations in the East and West freely submitted. He had prudent counsel for every contingency ; but after his departure the Jews stood without a leader, and Judaism without a guide. His son, Abulmeni Abraham Maimuni (born 1185, died 1254), certainly inherited his deep sense of religion, his amiable, peace-loving character, his high dignity as supreme head (Nagid) of the Egyptian Jews, and his position as court physician to Saladin's successors ; but his intellect and energy were not transmitted to him. Abraham Maimuni was skilled in medicine, was physician in ordinary of the Sultan Alkamel—a brother of Saladin—and presided over the hospital of Cairo, together with the physician and Arabian historian Ibn Abi Obsaibiya. He was likewise a Talmudical scholar, defended the learning of his father with Talmudical weapons, and delivered Rabbinical judgments. He was also well versed in philosophy, and composed a work in this spirit to reconcile the Agada with the philosophical ideas of the time. But Abraham Maimuni's whole knowledge was more acquired than original. He followed with slavish fidelity the footsteps of his great father, and appropriated his line of thought, surrendering his own intellectual independence. Abraham made the Maimunist system of teaching his own. Hence it happens, that what is striking originality in the father, appears in the son as a deduction and insignificant commonplace. Abraham Maimuni, it is true, enjoyed wide-spread esteem, but he was by no means an authority compelling attention and claiming submission.

In Europe, too, there were no men of commanding influence after the death of Maimuni. There appeared only local, but no generally recognised authorities. There existed no man who could step in the breach to pronounce a signal sentence at

the proper moment, and point out a right way to wavering minds. If Maimuni had only left a man of his spirit and character as his successor, the dissensions between those who interpreted the Bible according to its sense and those who took it literally would not have effected such great disasters, nor would mysticism have been able to allure men's minds into its web.

Whilst Judaism was in this isolated position, there sprang up against it, in the early part of the thirteenth century, a power, the like of which, as far as the means of oppression and enduring consequences are concerned, had not been seen since the time of Hadrian. It was Pope Innocent III., from whom all the evils which were experienced by the European nations up to the time of the Lutheran reformation originate, the tyrannical domination of the Roman Church over princes and peoples, the enslaving and abasing of the human mind, the persecution of free thought, the institution of the Inquisition, the erection of the *auto-da-fé* against heretics, *i.e.*, against those who dared to doubt the infallibility of the Roman Bishop. Pope Innocent III. was also an embittered enemy of Jews and Judaism, and dealt severer blows against them than had any of his predecessors.

The little band of Jews was like a thorn in the side of the mighty potentate of the Church, who enthroned and dethroned kings, distributed crowns and countries, and who, through his army of Papal legates, spies, Dominican and Franciscan monks, had subjugated with his bloodthirsty piety the whole of Europe, from the Atlantic Ocean to Constantinople, and from the Mediterranean to the Arctic regions. To him this handful of human beings with their clear intellect, their purified faith, their moral force and their superior culture, was a silent protest against Roman arrogance. At the

beginning of his reign, Innocent, although not exactly well-disposed to the Jews, was at least ready, like his predecessors, to protect them from unjust treatment. New Crusades were now constantly being requisitioned against the Sultanate of Egypt, which had declined in power since the death of Saladin, in order to wrest from its control the Holy City. The Crusaders, now that they had obtained a remission of sins, might say, "We may commit offences, since the taking up of the Cross has absolved us from all sins, aye, and even enables us to redeem the souls of sinners from purgatory." Jew-baiting, compulsory baptism, plundering and assassination, were once more the order of the day. The Jews, seeing that they needed special protection, appealed to Innocent to curb the violence of the Crusaders. Most graciously did he vouchsafe them what the leader of a respectably organised crew would not have refused. The Jews were not to be dragged by force to be converted, neither were they to be robbed, injured, or killed without judicial sanction. They were not to be molested during their festivals by being whipped, and having stones thrown at them; and, lastly, their cemeteries were to be respected, their dead were neither to be disinterred nor dishonoured. So much had Christianity degenerated, that decrees like these, and a constitution (*Constitutio Judæorum*) like this had now to be promulgated for the sake of the Jews. So deluded were its leaders, that the authorities of the Church passed these resolutions, not from the point of view of simple equity, but from a perverse notion that the Jews must be preserved so that the miracle of their universal conversion to Jesus might have an opportunity of being accomplished.

The Jews, who by the experience of a thousand years had learnt the art of recognising foes and friends from beneath their masks, were by no means

mistaken as to the real sentiments of Innocent towards them. When Don Pedro II., King of Aragon, returned home from his journey to Rome (Dec., 1204), where he caused himself to be anointed and crowned by the Pope as King, receiving at the same time his territory as tributary to Peter's chair, the Aragonian congregations were in great anxiety as to what might at any moment befall them. Don Pedro was made to take an oath, that he would persecute all heretics then in his country, defend the liberties and rights of the Church, and faithfully obey the Pope. What if the liberty of the Church should be interpreted thus:—That the Jews were either to be driven out of the land or degraded to the position of bondsmen! The Aragonian Jews, apprehending something of the sort, appealed to their God in fervent prayer, appointed a general fast, and with a scroll of the Torah assembled to meet the home-bound king. Their fear on this occasion, however, was groundless. Don Pedro, who was not very warm in his allegiance to the Pope, and was intent only on strengthening his own position, had no thought of persecuting the Jews. Besides, owing to his periodic money difficulties, he could not do without them; he had become their debtor. Innocent, however, with jealous eye, guarded against his princes conceding to the Jews anything beyond the bare right to live. The French king, Philip Augustus—the arch-enemy of the Jews, who had tortured, plundered, and driven them out of his country, persecuted them and called them back again, from sheer spite and also from pecuniary embarrassments—was reprimanded by the Pope for favouring the Jews. It offended his sight, wrote the Pope, that some princes should prefer the descendants of the crucifiers to the heirs of the crucified Christ, as if the son of the slave-woman could ever be the heir of the son of the free-woman. It had

reached his ears that in France the Jews had obtained possession, through usury, of the property of the Church, as also of that of the Christians, and that, in spite of the resolution of the Lateran Council under Alexander III., they kept Christian servants and nurses in their houses; and further that Christians were not admitted as witnesses against the Jews, which was also contrary to the resolution of that assembly; and again, that the community of Sens had built a new synagogue which was situated higher than the Church of that neighbourhood, and in which prayers were read not quietly, as before the expulsion, but so loudly as to interrupt the divine service in the Church. Lastly, Innocent censured the King of France for allowing the Jews too much liberty. They had the audacity during the Easter week to appear in the streets and villages, scoffing at the faithful for worshipping a crucified God, and thus turning them away from their faith. He vehemently repeated the diabolical calumny that the Jews secretly assassinated Christians. As to the public and daily murders of Jews, the chief of the Church had little to say. He exhorted Philip Augustus to maintain true Christian zeal in oppressing the Jews, and did not fail to mention at the same time that the heretics in his country were to be exterminated. The spiritual ruler of Europe could find no rest while Jews and heretics remained. In the same year (May, 1205) Innocent wrote a sharp pastoral letter to the King of Castile, Alfonso the Noble, a protector of the Jews, because he would not suffer the priests to deprive the Jews of their Mahometan slaves by causing them to be baptised, or to collect tithes from the farms of Jews and Mahometans. He threatened the proud Spanish king with the reprobation of the Church if he should continue to allow the synagogue to thrive, and the Church to be reduced. Innocent insisted

upon the Jews paying tithes to the clergy from all lands which they had acquired from the Christians, that the Church whose power depended so much on money should suffer no loss. His plan of coercion, to give force to his directions, was indirect excommunication. As he had not the power to punish Jews with excommunication, he threatened to inflict that penalty on those Christians who carried on any intercourse with the Jews, and especially on those who would not comply with his apostolic rulings.

The deep prejudice of Innocent against the Jewish race was made still more evident by a denunciatory letter which he wrote to the Count Nevers, who was favourably disposed to the Jews. Because this Count did not embitter the lives of the latter, and abstained from molesting them, the Pope wrote to him thus (1208): "The Jews, like the fratricide Cain, are doomed to wander about the earth as fugitives and vagabonds, and their faces must be covered with insult. They are under no circumstances to be protected by Christian princes, but, on the contrary, to be condemned to serfdom. It is, therefore, discreditable for Christian princes to receive Jews into their towns and villages, and to employ them as usurers in order to extort money from Christians. They (the princes) arrest Christians who are in debt to Jews, and allow the Jews to distrain Christian castles and villages; and, what was the very root of the evil, the Church in this manner lost its tithes. It is scandalous that Christians should have their cattle slaughtered, and their grapes pressed by Jews, who are thus enabled, according to their religious precepts, to take unto themselves the ripe fruit, and leave the gleanings to the Christians. A still greater sin is it that this wine prepared by Jews should be used in the Church for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Whilst the Christians are excommunicated

for favouring the Jews, and their land is laid under the ban by decree of the Pope, the Jews are all the time laughing in their sleeves at the fact that the harps belonging to the Church are hung up on the willows, and that the priests during the interdict are deprived of their revenues." Innocent in his pastoral letter threatened the Count de Nevers, as well as his supporters, with the severest punishment which the Church was capable of inflicting in the event of their continuing to favour the Jews. He was the first Pope who directed against the Jews the exasperating fury and inhuman severity of the Church. Everything provoked his wrath against them; he begrudged them the very air and light, and only a delusive hope restrained him from openly preaching a crusade and a war of annihilation against them. Innocent was well aware why he so thoroughly abhorred Jews and Judaism. He hated those among them who agitated indirectly against the despotism of Christianity, upon which the Papacy had built its power. The aversion of the truly God-fearing and moral Christians to the arrogance, unchastity, and insatiable covetousness of the hierarchy had in some measure been prompted by the Jews. The Albigenses in South France, who were branded as heretics, and who were the most resolute opponents of the Papacy, had imbibed their hostility from intercourse with educated Jews. Amongst the Albigenses there was a sect which unhesitatingly declared the Jewish Law preferable to that of the Christians. The eye of Innocent was, therefore, directed to the Jews of the South of France, as well as to the Albigenses, in order to check their influence on the minds of the Christians. Count Raymund VI. of Toulouse and St. Gilles, styled by the troubadours and singers of that time "Raymund the Good," who was looked upon as a friend of the Albigenses, and was consequently

cruelly harassed, was also credited by the Pope with favouring the Jews. In the list of transgressions which he drew up against him, Innocent accordingly reckoned the crime of employing Jewish officials in his State, and of generally favouring the Jews. In the bloody Crusade which the Pope promoted against him and the Albigenses, the South French Jewish communities necessarily came in for their share of the sufferings. As soon as Raymund was humbled he had to submit to being dragged into the Church naked, and scourged by the Papal legate, Milo. He was also forced to confess that, amongst other sins, he had committed the gross crime of entrusting Jews with public offices. Thereupon the legate ordered him, under penalty of losing his dignity, to humbly take an oath that he would discharge all Jewish officials in his country, that he would never again appoint them, and never admit any Jews to either public or private offices. The unfortunate prince was compelled, with the sword pointed at his breast, to make and to repeat this declaration (June, 1209). Thirteen barons who were connected with Raymund, and were regarded as protectors of the Albigenses, were similarly forced by Milo to give an assurance on oath that they would depose their Jewish officers, and that they would never again place any public trust in their hands. In the meantime, a fanatical crusading army was organised against the Albigenses at the instigation of the Pope and the bloodthirsty monk, Arnold of Citeaux. It was led by the ambitious and rapacious Count Simon de Montfort, and was directed against the Viscount Raymund Roger and his capital Beziers. Roger was also doubly hated by the Pope and his legate as the secret friend of the Albigensian heretics, and as protector of the Jews. On the 22nd July (1209) the beautiful city of Beziers was stormed, and a cruel bloodshed was perpetrated on its inhabitants in the name of

God. "We spared," wrote Arnold, the man of blood, to the Pope, "we spared no dignity, no sex, no age; nearly 20,000 human beings have perished by the sword. After that great massacre the town was plundered and burnt, and the revenge of God seemed to rage upon it in a wonderful manner." Even orthodox Catholics were not spared, and to the question as to how the orthodox were to be distinguished from the heretics, which the Crusaders put to Arnold, he answered, "Strike down; God will recognise His own." Under these circumstances the flourishing and cultured Jewish communities of Beziers had still less reason to hope for any indulgence. The result was that two hundred Jews were cut down, and a large number thrown into captivity. The Jews on their side marked this year of the Albigensian Crusade as a "Year of Mourning."

In consequence of the diplomatic victory over Raymund of Toulouse, and also the military victory over Raymund Roger of Beziers, the intolerant Church had acquired supremacy not only in the South of France, but also everywhere else. The audacity of free-thinkers who claimed to form for themselves an opinion upon religion, the Holy Scripture, or upon the position of the clergy, was punished by bloodshed. The Pope had now, as it was called in the church-language of that epoch, to wield the spiritual and secular sword. Those who thought rationally were killed, and independent thinking was branded as a crime. The disciples of the philosopher, Amalarich of Bena, who maintained that "Rome was the licentious Babylon, and the Pope the Antichrist; he dwelt on the oil-mountain, *i.e.*, in the luxury of power": intelligent men, who considered that to build altars for saints, and to worship the bones of martyrs was idolatry, were burnt as blasphemers in Paris. Philosophical writings which were brought over to France from Spain, and which might have enriched

or fertilized Christian theology, amongst others the works of the great Jewish philosopher, Solomon Gebirol, which had been translated by order of an archbishop, were interdicted and forbidden to be read by the Parisian Synod. The light which was just dawning amongst the nations of Europe was extinguished by the representatives of the Church.

The Jews of South France and Spain were as yet the only apostles of higher learning. But the Church begrudged them even this glory; and worked with all its might to degrade them. The assembly of Avignon (Sept. 1209), presided over by the Papal legate, Milo, at which Count Raymund was again laid under the ban, and at which the severest measures were passed against heretics, resolved that all barons of free cities should take an oath that they would entrust no office whatever to Jews, and should allow no Christian servants to be employed in Jewish houses. One of the ordinances of this council prohibited the Jews from working not only on Sunday and all Christian holidays, but also forbade them to eat meat on Christian festivals. Everywhere the Jews felt the heavy hand of the Romish Church, which stretched forth unhindered to degrade them to the dust.

In England, the Jews had at that time three enemies: the licentious, unprincipled John Lackland, who shrank from no expedients to extort money from them; the hostile barons, who saw in them the source of the king's wealth, by depriving them of which they thought to gain the means of damaging the power of the king; and, lastly, Stephen Langton, whom the Pope had appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and who had introduced the tyrannical spirit of the Church into England. At the beginning of his reign King John showed an appearance of friendship towards them, for as he had usurped the crown of his nephew, and in consequence

had France and a part of the English nobility against him, he naturally sought to win over the merchant classes of the people to his side. He appointed a Talmudical scholar, Jacob of London, as Chief Rabbi over all the English communities (*presbyteratus omnium Judæorum totius Angliæ*), and all his subjects were warned against attacking either his property or his dignity. The King called this Chief Rabbi "his dear, dear friend." Every outrage that was offered to the latter was looked upon by the King as a personal insult to himself. He further renewed and confirmed the privileges and liberties of the Jews which they had received from Henry I., and which also contained the remarkable provision that a Christian was bound to prefer his complaint against a Jew before a Jewish tribunal. The Jews, it is true, had to pay much money—4,000 silver marks—for these generous concessions. But it was already a great boon that they received in return for money, protection and freedom of movement. When the Jews were in peril on account of the London mob, John wrote a threatening letter to the representatives of the capital, in which he reproached them that, whilst the Jews living in another part of England were left unmolested, those of London were exposed to injury, and he stated that he should hold them responsible for all bodily and material damage inflicted on the Jews. As, however, John proceeded to quarrel more and more with his barons, and became involved in oppressive money difficulties, he gradually abandoned his mild demeanour, which had never been genuine, and adopted a totally different attitude towards the Jews. On one occasion he imprisoned a large number of English Jews in order to extort money from them (1210), and he demanded from one Jew of Bristol alone the sum of 10,000 marks of silver. As the latter

could not or would not pay them down, John had his teeth extracted one by one. The crushing antipathy against them from all sides, in addition to their yearning after the Holy Land, which the poet Jehuda Halevi had stirred up in them, induced more than 300 Rabbis of France and England to emigrate to Jerusalem (1211). The most renowned of them were Jonathan Cohen of Lunel, who was connected with Maimuni and was one of his admirers, and Samson ben Abraham, an opponent of the school of Maimonides. Many of the emigrants stopped on their way at Cairo in order to make the acquaintance of Maimuni's son, who received them with great respect and joy. Only Samson ben Abraham, the exponent of a one-sided Judaism, avoided meeting the son of the man whom he considered as almost a heretic.

The French and English emigrants, who were honourably received and provided with privileges by the Sultan Aladil, Saladin's able brother, lost no time in building houses of prayer and learning, and transplanted the Tossafists' method of exposition to the East. Intellectual activity, even in the field of the Talmud, did not, however, thrive in the Holy City. It seemed as if the curse of heaven had fallen upon this once glorious, and now distressed, city; and that since the Roman legions, under Titus and Hadrian, had struck down her noblest sons, she had become altogether barren. Not a single man of importance had sprung up in the City since the destruction of the Synhedrion. Jerusalem, like the whole of Palestine, was notable only on account of its illustrious dead. Pious men, who yearned after the home of their ancestors, searched only for their graves; for fountains of life it was hopeless to look there. Jonathan Cohen and his associates conscientiously visited the spots upon which the Temple once shone, the graves of the fathers, kings, prophets and doctors of the Mishna,

wept and prayed upon the ruins of their departed glory. They met the Exilarch David, of Mosul, who held a letter of recommendation from the Caliph Alnasir Ledin Allah, which secured him free access to every place of interest. In the East the Jews were allowed to assert a certain show of dignity; the Caliph and Sultan, the wielders of the spiritual and worldly might, granted them that much—for money. In Europe, however, it was far different; the lives of the Jews were continually in peril from a fanaticism which was ever being goaded into activity.

The Almohadic prince of the faithful Mahomet Alnasir, of Northern Africa, had called to arms the entire male population at his disposal to a holy war against the increasing power of the Christians in Mahometan Spain, and led at least half a million warriors across the sea over to Andalusia. The strong city of Salvatierra, in spite of the gallant defence of the knightly order of Calatrava, fell into the hands of the Mahometans (September, 1211). In this long siege the Jewish community of Salvatierra was destroyed, and a remnant fled to Toledo. The Christian kings of Spain, terrified by this danger, laid aside their mutual hostilities in order to oppose the overpowering enemy with united forces. But as the Christian population of Spain did not feel themselves strong enough to undertake a war against the Mahometans, Alfonso the Noble, King of Castile, appealed to Innocent to instigate a general crusade against the Crescent, to which the Pope very readily consented. And thus it was that many European warriors travelled across the Pyrenees, amongst them also the bloodthirsty Cistercian monk, Arnold, with his troop, who had assured themselves of future bliss by all sorts of barbarities practised on the Albigenses and the Jews of the South of France. The Ultramontanes, as they

were called, in contradistinction to the Spanish warriors, whose wrath against everything that was not Roman Catholic had risen to the point of frenzy, took umbrage at the comparatively happy relations of the Jews in the Spanish capital, at their wealth, their freedom and their importance at court. These foreign crusaders, animated by Arnold's violent fanaticism, suddenly attacked the Jews of Toledo, and killed many of them (June, 1212), and they would have all fared very badly had not the noble Alfonso interfered in their behalf, and had not the Christian knights and citizens of Toledo, animated by a sense of honour, repelled the attacks of the fanatics. This was the first persecution of the Jews in Castille; the attack being made only by foreigners, and disapproved by the natives.

The Church, however, laboured to include the Spanish kings and people among the enemies of the Jews. The extraordinary change of sentiment towards the Jews which had set in since Innocent's Pontificate was evidenced by a resolution of the Paris Synod of the same year. King Louis VII., and even his son Philip, had stoutly resisted the canonical institute that the Jews were not to employ Christian servants. But now the French councils, under the presidency of the Papal legates, and with the consent of the King sought to extend this narrow-minded practice still further, so that not only was a Christian woman prohibited from nursing a Jewish child, but a Christian midwife was not even allowed to attend upon a Jewish woman in confinement, because Christians, who stayed with Jews, took a liking to Judaism. It was with reason, therefore, that the Jews, on hearing of the formation of a new council, were greatly alarmed lest they should be subjected to a new species of tyranny. When, therefore, the Papal legate, Peter of Benevento, proclaimed a Synod in Montpellier

(beginning of 1214) to which he invited priests and laymen in order completely to divest the Count of Toulouse of his dominions, and hand over the territory plundered from him to Simon de Montfort, and to adopt the severest measures against the remnant of the Albigenses, the Jews of the South of France felt that a great danger was menacing them, and wherever it was possible took steps to avert it. At the instance of the illustrious Don Isaac (Zag) Benveniste, physician in ordinary to the King of Aragon, many Jewish congregations sent each two deputies to use their influence with clergymen and laymen, that no new restrictions might be imposed upon them. And it seems that they succeeded in warding off the danger; for the Council of Montpellier omitted all mention of the Jews in its deliberations.

Hardly had this local danger been averted, than another and more general one appeared to be advancing. This threw all those Jews who received tidings of it into the greatest consternation. Innocent III. had, through an encyclical pastoral letter, convoked to Rome the representatives of entire Christendom to a general Œcumenical Council, at which the energetic prosecution of the Crusades against the Mahometans in the Holy Land, in the Pyrenean peninsula, and against the heretics of the South of France, the deposition of the Count of Toulouse, and the transference of his estates to Simon de Montfort were to be ratified, and the reformation of the Church, *i.e.*, the extension of her power in the States, was to be promoted. The congregations of the South of France, who had been informed that a severe blow was about to be dealt the Jews at the meeting of this Council, were completely staggered. Isaac Benveniste accordingly invited Jewish deputies to the town, Bourg de St. Gilles, in order to select certain influential and able men as deputies to Rome who should endeavour to

prevent the enactment of resolutions against the Jews. The names of the delegates chosen for this purpose are unknown, because their labours proved fruitless. The great Fourth Lateran Council was presided over by Pope Innocent III., and comprised over 1,200 deputies from many Christian States, both Churchmen and laymen. This Council was summoned by the Pope with the object of raising his power to the highest pitch. To its action is also due the founding of the two orders of the Dominicans and Franciscans, distinguished by their hatred of freedom and lust for blood. This Council, which wrapped round Christian Europe the ignominious bands of spiritual servitude, and threw it back to the ignorance of barbarism, inflicted deep wounds on Judaism. On the feast of the Maccabees, during which the children of Jacob celebrate their deliverance from Syrian tyranny, this Council, which placed the yoke of the deepest degradation on posterity, brought its deliberations to a conclusion (30th November, 1215). Though in the midst of gigantic undertakings, the Pope and Elders of the Council nevertheless did not forget the Jews. Four of the seventy canonical decrees there determined dealt with the Jews. One canon set forth that Christian princes should keep strict watch over the Jews, so that they should not exact too high an interest from their Christian debtors. This restriction is not altogether unjustifiable—although, indeed, Christian clergy and laity promoted and made large sums by Jewish usury; while whole Christian companies, like the Lombards and Caorsini (called also Ultramontane) practised usury on an enormous scale. The Church did not take any notice of the financial needs of the time, and kept to the strict letter of the Bible. The Council in its time was also in some measure just in forbidding baptized Jews to retain Jewish customs, because it would have been suicidal to the Church to allow free-

dom of conscience. If the accusation is indeed true that some Jews at that time used to mock at the Christian processions at Easter, then the authorities of the Church were partly right in forbidding them to show themselves openly on that day; although an equitable judge would not place restrictions on a whole community on account of a few indecorous members. Yet more unjust was the canon which decreed that the Jews should not only give tithes of their houses and property, but also that the head of every Jewish family should subscribe a yearly sum at the Easter festival. The Catholic clergy considered themselves as lords, to whom the Jews, as their subjects, were to bring tribute. But it was quite in the spirit of the persecutor of the Albigenses that the canonical law, which ran thus, was renewed by Innocent: "That no Christian prince should bestow any office on a Jew." The transgressor of this rule was to be punished with excommunication, and every Jewish official was to be excluded from the society of Christians until he resigned his office in disgrace. The Council, however, were unable to bring forward even a show of reason for this canonical decree; neither the New Testament, nor the Fathers of the Church, however much they hated the Jews, had offered a precedent for it. The Lateran Synod was compelled to go back to the Provincial Council of Toledo, under Recarred, king of the Catholic West Goths, in order to find a justification for this scandalous law. The depth of the degradation of the Jews, however, was reached by the decision of the Council that Jews in all Christian countries and at all times should wear a dress distinguished from that of the Christians. The reason urged was that in many lands where Jews (and Mahometans) wore the costume of the country, mischievous intermarriages took place between the Jews and Christians. By a forced argument it was shown that this law was contained in the Bible, and

that Moses had commanded the Jews to wear a peculiar dress. Therefore from their twelfth year the Jewish men were to wear in their hats, and Jewesses in their bonnets, a peculiar colour as a badge of their race. This stigma on the Jews was an invention of Pope Innocent and of the fourth Council assembled at Rome. It must not, however, be strictly called an invention, because the Pope borrowed this idea of forcing the Jews to wear a peculiar badge from the fanatical Mahometans. The Almohade Prince of the Faithful of Africa and South Spain, Abu-Yussuff Almansur, had enjoined those Jews, who through compulsion had adopted the Mahometan faith, to wear a hideous dress, heavy clothes with long sleeves which almost reached the feet, and instead of turbans, large bonnets of the ugliest shape. Said this fanatic logically: "If I knew that the converted Jews had adopted the Mahometan belief with an upright heart, then I would allow them to intermarry with the Mussulmans. If, on the other hand, I were convinced that they are still sceptics, I would put the men to the sword, enslave their children, and confiscate their goods. But I am doubtful about this point; therefore they shall appear distinguished by a hateful uniform." His successor, Abu-Abdullah Mahomet Alnasir, allowed himself to be so far persuaded as to change this mean apparel of the Pseudo-Mahometans for yellow garments and turbans. By this colour of raiment the class of people who were outwardly Moslems, yet in their heart of hearts still Jews, was characterised in the first decade of the thirteenth century in the kingdom of Morocco. This barbarous treatment of the Jews Pope Innocent III. now imitated, and their greatest humiliation during the six centuries dated from 30th November, 1215.

Provincial Councils, State assemblies, and Royal Cabinets were immediately formed to consider

as to the exclusion of the Jews from all honours and offices, and also for the purpose of determining on the colour, form, length and breadth of the Jewish badge, with pedantic thoroughness. A badge, square or round in form, of saffron-yellow or some other colour, on the hat or mantle, as the symbol of Judaism, was a provocation to the mob to insult the wearers, and to bespatter them with mud; it was also a hint to the ignorant populace to fall on them, to maltreat, and even kill them; and it afforded an opportunity for the better class to treat the Jews as the lowest of mankind, to levy contributions on them, or to exile them from the land.

Yet worse than this outward dishonour was the influence of the mark on the Jews themselves. They became more and more accustomed to their ignominious position, and lost all feeling of self-respect or esteem. They neglected their outward appearance, because they had to remain a despised, dishonoured race who, even in the remote future, could not lay claim to honour. They became more and more careless of their speech, because they could not step beyond their limited circle; and in their own midst they could make themselves understood by means of a jargon. They lost all taste and sense of beauty, and to some extent became as despicable as their enemies desired. So much of their manly bearing and courage left them that a child could cause them annoyance. The punishment which Isaiah had prophesied should overtake the house of Jacob was fulfilled to the letter: "You will speak humbly from the ground, and from the dust shall proceed your word." The great misery of the Middle Ages began for the Jews with Pope Innocent III. In comparison to their subsequent sufferings all foregoing persecutions from the time of the Christian era seemed like innocent bantering. But the Jews were not easily persuaded to comply with

the injunction, and to wear the mark of shame forced on them. This was especially the case with the communities in Spain and Southern France, who, being accustomed until then to an honourable position, would not suffer themselves to be humiliated without a struggle. Besides, there were influential Jews in the Courts of Toledo and Saragossa, either as ambassadors to foreign courts or as treasurers of the royal coffers. They exerted their utmost efforts to prevent the enforcement of the decree that the shameful mark should be worn. When Pope Innocent III. died (1216), and Pope Honorius III., who was of a mild temperament compared to Innocent, ascended the Papal throne, the Jews had hopes of a repeal of this canonical law. In fact, Isaac Benveniste seems to have been of this opinion, for he exerted himself greatly to avert the blow from the Jews. They were successful in delaying the carrying out of the canonical decree. At least, King Alfonso IX. of Leon did not compel the Jews of his land to obey the decree. Pope Honorius was then compelled to exhort the Bishop of Valencia and two brother bishops to see that the decree was duly attended to, and to exclude the Jews from offices of honour. The communities of Southern France viewed with joy the victorious progress of the army of the repeatedly excommunicated Raymund VII. of Toulouse against the crusading army and Simon de Montfort, because their security depended on the victory of the Albigenses. The Duke of Toulouse and his barons, in spite of their oaths, continued to promote Jews to offices, for they saw that this policy would lead to their advantage. It may be that it was on account of the secret and open dependence of the Jews on Raymund that Simon de Montfort's wife, Alice, of Montmorency, ordered all the Jews of Toulouse—over which town she had charge—to be arrested, women and children, and allowed them only

the choice between death and conversion, although her husband, as well as his brother, had sworn to the Jews that their lives would be secure, and that freedom should be allowed them for the due exercise of their religion. At the same time Alice ordered that Jewish children under the age of six should be torn away from their parents and given over to the priests in order to be baptised and brought up as Christians. The heartless wife did not concern herself as to the pangs that the Jewish women suffered. In spite of this, the majority of the members of the Toulouse community refused to become Christians.

When, however, Simon de Montfort heard of this cruel persecution of the Jews by his wife, he ordered the prisoners to be released and to be allowed to practise their religion in freedom. The joy of the unhappy people when they were told of this deliverance (1 Ab—7 July, 1217) was great, but it was mixed with sadness, for the Cardinal legate Bertrand had decided that those children who had been baptised should not be allowed to return to their parents. The legate also insisted upon the Jews wearing a distinctive badge. In the meantime there came a counter-command from the Pope, that the decree should not be too strictly enforced, but the cause of this change in the Papal policy is unknown. In Aragon the Jews obtained the same immunity from indignity through the untiring efforts of Isaac Benveniste, physician-in-ordinary to the king, Jayme I. (Jacob). This illustrious man had rendered to the king such important services that the latter, with the consent of the bishops of the country, energetically recommended him to the Pope, and strove to obtain for him recognition from the Papal chair. Wonderful to relate, Honorius took up the matter, and, in recognition of his merits in eschewing usury and zealously assisting Catholics, sent Isaac

Benveniste a diploma that he should in no wise be molested. For his sake also the Jews were exempted from wearing the badge (1220).

However friendly Honorius affected to be in this matter, he was nevertheless far from being disposed to recommend Jews to posts of dignity. In an autograph letter of 1220 he exhorted King Jayme of Aragon not to entrust any Jew with the office of Ambassador to a Mahometan Court, for it was not probable "that those who abhorred Christianity would prove themselves faithful to its professors." In this spirit the Pope wrote also to the Archbishop of Tarragona, to the Bishops of Barcelona and Ilerda, to try to prevail on the King of Aragon that he should in no case employ Jews in diplomatic legations, and that he should abolish an example so perilous to Christendom. The Pope also exhorted the Church dignitaries of Toledo, Valencia, Burgos, Leon, and Zamora, to use their influence with the Kings of Castile, Leon, and Navarre for the same purpose. How little did the Pope know the incorruptible fidelity of the Jews towards their sovereigns, and their love for the land of their birth. So far from abusing the trust reposed in them, the Jewish ambassadors applied the utmost zeal in bringing their commission to a prosperous end. But since Innocent III., it had become a fixed principle of the Church to degrade and humiliate the Jews. Although Honorius had exempted the Jews of Aragon from wearing the badge of disgrace, he insisted that those of England should not be released from it.

In that country, Stephen Langton, who had been appointed Archbishop by the Pope, held the reins of government, after the death of the frantic tyrant John Lackland, and during the minority of his son Henry III. This prelate exercised his power as if he were the wearer of the crown. At the Council

of Oxford, which he summoned in 1222, several paragraphs with reference to the oppression of the Jews were published. They were not to keep any Christian servants, and were not to build any new synagogues. They were to be held to the payment of the tithe of their produce and the Church taxes, according to the decision of the Lateran Council. Above all things they were to be compelled to wear the disgraceful badge, a woollen stripe on the breast, of a different colour to the dress, four fingers long and two broad. They might not enter the churches, and still less, as had hitherto been their custom, might they place their treasures there for security from the attacks of the brigand nobles. These restrictions were imposed on the English Jews because they had incurred blame for something monstrous, and had proved themselves ungrateful. But in what their crime consisted is not mentioned. Was perhaps the fact that a deacon of England had in the same year gone over to Judaism, laid to their charge? In after years such an occurrence caused the expulsion of the Jews from England. This time the deacon was summarily burnt at the stake for his apostasy. The Church at this period knew no more effective means of refuting any contradiction to their teachings than the blazing fire.

It is remarkable that the hostile measures of the Pope against the Jews at that time had least effect in Germany, and that under the Emperor Frederick II. they enjoyed a comparatively favourable position. They were certainly chamber-slaves of the empire and the emperor, and were even so called; but nevertheless princes, especially the archdukes of Austria, now and again entrusted into their hands important offices. Those Jews who had access to the courts of the princes always laboured to render themselves free from the imperial and state Jewish taxes, and obtain privileges from

their patrons. As, however, it was the custom in the German congregations to distribute the tax among all the members of the congregation in proportion to their means, if the richer and more influential men obtained exemption from it the poorer members found themselves greatly encumbered, and complained about it to the Rabbinical authorities of that time. A synod of Rabbis, which met together at Mayence (Tammuz—July, 1223), discussed this question, for the purpose of adjusting it. There were at this synod, which numbered more than twenty members, the most influential Rabbis in Germany: David ben Kalonymos, of Münzenburg (in Hesse-Darmstadt), a famous Tossafist; Baruch ben Samuel, of Mayence, composer of a Talmudical work; Chiskiya ben Reuben, of Boppard, the courageous champion of his persecuted co-religionists; Simcha ben Samuel, of Speyer, likewise a Talmudical author; Eleazar ben Joel Halevi, called Abi-Ezri from his Talmudical works; lastly, the German Kabbalist Elazar ben Jehuda of Worms, called Rokeach, a prolific author, who, through his secret science, contributed his share to obscuring the light of thought in Judaism.

This Mayence synod of Rabbis renewed many ordinances of the times of Rabbenu Tam, and established others besides. Its decisions mark the condition of the German Jews in the beginning of the thirteenth century. The synod enacted that Jews should on no account incur blame by dishonourable dealings with Christians or by the counterfeiting of coin. An informer was to be compelled to make good the loss which he had caused by his information. Those who had freedom of access to the king (emperor), were none the less under the obligation to bear the communal burden in raising the tax. He who received a religious office from Christian authorities incurred the penalty of ex-

communication. In the synagogues devotion and decorum were to prevail. The brother-in-law was to complete the release of his widowed sister-in-law from her levirate marriage without extortion of money and trickery, and he was not to keep her in suspense. He who would not submit to the regulations of the synod or who did not respect a sentence of excommunication was to be delivered over to the secular power. The determination of disputed cases was to be the business of the Rabbinate and the congregations of Mayence, Worms, and Speyer, as being the oldest German cities inhabited by Jews.

In spite of the repeated exertions of the cultured Jews to avert the disgrace of wearing the badge, Papal intolerance nevertheless gradually gained the ascendancy, and the edict of the Lateran Council of 1215 henceforth had sway. Even the Emperor Frederick II., the most intelligent and enlightened prince that Germany ever had, whose orthodoxy was more than suspicious, had at length to bow to the will of the Papacy, and introduce by law the distinctive mark of the Jews in his inherited provinces of Naples and Sicily.

In South France, where the spirit of persecuting other religious beliefs had been intensified among the clergy more perhaps than in other Christian countries in consequence of the war against the Albigenses, the edicts of Innocent III. for the degradation and humiliation of the Jews found only too zealous vindicators. At a council at Narbonne (1227) not only were the canonical ordinances against them confirmed, the prohibition of taking interest, the wearing of the Jewish badge, the payment of a tax to the Church, but even the long forgotten decrees from the ancient time of the Merovingian kings were again renewed against them. The Jews at Easter were not allowed to be

seen in the streets, and they were prohibited from leaving their houses during the festival.

In the next year the Albigensian war came to an end, and the horrors of a blind, revengeful, bloodthirsty reaction began. The preacher-monks, the disciples of Domingo, glorified Christianity through the agonies of the rack and stake. Whoever was in possession of a Bible in the Romance (Provençal) language incurred trial on the charge of heresy at the court of the Dominicans, which had the exclusive right to bloodthirsty persecutions. Their allies, the Franciscans or Minorite monks, energetically seconded them. It was not long before these destroying angels in monks' cowls put their clutches upon the sons of Jacob.

Four men appeared at the same time on the stage of history who were thoroughly pervaded with the spirit of Christianity, and especially with its oppressive, unlovely, inhuman form, and they rendered the life of the Jews in many countries an inconceivable torture. The first was Pope Gregory IX., a passionate old man, the deadly enemy of the Emperor Frederick II., whose sole ambition was the extension of the power of the Church and the destruction of his opponents, who cast the torch of discord into the German Empire, and annihilated its unity and greatness. The second was King Louis IX. of France, who had acquired the name of "the Holy," from the simplicity of his heart and the narrowness of his head; he was a most pliant tool for crafty monks, a worshipper of relics, who was strongly inclined to adopt the monk's cowl, and most readily assisted in the persecution of heretics, and who hated the Jews so thoroughly that he could not behold them. Similar to him was his contemporary Ferdinand III. of Castile, who also inherited the crown of Leon, and was likewise recognised by the Church as "the Holy," because he burnt heretics with his own hand. Lastly,

the Dominican-General Raymund de Penyaforte (Peñaforte), the most frantic oppressor of the heretics, who applied all his efforts to convert Jews and Mahometans to Christianity. In this spirit he exercised his influence upon the kings of Aragon and Castile; caused seminaries to be established, where instruction in Hebrew and Arabic was given, in order that these languages should be employed for the conversion of Jews and Saracens. These tyrannical, pitiless enemies, furnished with every resource, were let loose upon the Jews. Gregory IX. exhorted the Bishop of Valencia in a missive (1229), to quell the arrogance of the Jews towards the Christians, as if the Church hovered in the greatest peril. Consequently under Jayme I., of Aragon, the position of the Jews of Aragon and of the province belonging to it took an evil turn. Spurred on by clerical fanaticism and by greed for gold, this king declared the Jews to be his clients, *i.e.*, in a manner his body-slaves.

Everywhere the hostile spirit which first proceeded from Innocent, and was fanned by the Dominicans, assumed the form of severe laws against the Jews. At two Church assemblies, in Rouen and Tours (1231), the hostile decrees of the Lateran Council against the Jews were re-enacted, and at the latter meeting another restriction was added, that Jews were not to be admitted as witnesses against Christians, because much evil might arise from the testimony of Jews.

The narrow-minded disposition of the Church towards the Jews had effect, through the increased power of the Papacy after Innocent, even on the Jews dwelling on the banks of the Lower Danube and the Theiss. In Hungary they had settled at a very early date, having immigrated thither from the Byzantine and Chazarian empire. Since there were many heathens and Mahometans among the dominant Magyars, the kings had to be very patient

with them ; besides this, their Christianity was only on the surface, and had not yet penetrated their feeling and mode of thinking. Consequently in Hungary the Jews from time immemorial had the right of coinage, and were in friendly relations with their German brethren. Till the thirteenth century Jews as well as Mahometans were farmers of salt, slate and taxes, and filled various royal offices. Mixed marriages between Jews and Christians also happened frequently, as the Church had not yet set a firm foot in the country. This enjoyment of dignities by the Jews in a country, even though it was only half Christian, could not be tolerated by the Church : it was a thorn in its side. Accordingly when King Andreas, who was at strife with the magnates of the country, and was compelled to issue a charter of liberty, applied to Pope Gregory IX., the latter, in a letter, impressed upon Robert, Archbishop of Gran, to deprive both Jews and Mahometans of their public offices. Andreas at first submitted to the Papal will, but did not carry out the orders of the Pope zealously, because indeed he could not well dispense with his Jewish officials and farmers. On this account and for other grounds of complaint the Archbishop of Gran passed sentence of excommunication on the king and his followers by order of the Pope (beginning of 1232). By various strong measures Andreas was at last compelled to obey, and, like Raymund of Toulouse, he had solemnly to promise (1232) that he would not admit Jews or Saracens to offices, nor suffer any Christian slaves to continue in their possession, nor allow mixed marriages, and lastly that he would compel them to wear a badge. This same oath, to humiliate members of other faiths, had to be taken, by order of the Papal legate, by the Crown-prince, the King of Slavonia, and all the magnates and dignitaries of the empire.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MAIMUNIST CONTROVERSY AND THE RISE OF THE KABBALA.

The Opposition against Maimuni—Maimunists and anti-Maimunists—Meir Abulafia—Samson of Sens—Solomon of Montpellier—Excommunication of the Maimunists—David Kimchi's energetic Advocacy of Maimuni—Nachmani—His Character and Work—His Relations to Maimuni, Ibn Ezra, and the Kabbala—Solomon of Montpellier calls in the aid of the Dominicans—Moses of Coucy—Modern date of the Kabbala—Azriel and Ezra—Doctrines of the Kabbala—Jacob ben Sheshet Gerundi—The German Kabbalists—Eleazar of Worms—Last flicker of the Neo-Hebraic Poetry—The Satirical Romance: Al-Charisi and Joseph ben Sabara.

1232—1236 C.E.

As misfortunes never come singly, but draw others after them, so besides the insults and humiliations which the Jews suffered from without, there now arose an alarming disunion within their ranks. Remarkably enough, this intestine war was associated with Maimuni, whose aims, during his whole life, were directed to effecting union and complete finality in Judaism. But in undertaking to explain philosophically the intellectual side of Judaism, he established principles which did not by any means bear a Jewish stamp on them, nor were they in consonance with the Bible, and still less with the Talmud. Those scholars whose learning was entirely confined to the Talmud would not hear anything of the philosophical discussion of Judaism, considered it sinful to be occupied with any branches of knowledge, even when applied to the service of Judaism, and took their stand, rightly or from a misapprehension, on the Talmudical saying, "Withhold your children from excessive reflection." Even intelligent men, and such as were

philosophically trained, recognised that Maimuni in his endeavour to reconcile religion with the philosophy of the age, had made the former subservient to the latter, and that which should have been the mistress over the mind to be a slave. Articles of belief and Scriptural verses, which did not admit of philosophical justification, have no value according to Maimuni's system. Miracles were not consistently recognised in Maimuni's philosophy; but attempts were made to reduce them as much as possible to natural occurrences, and to interpret in a rationalistic manner the Biblical verses which contain them. Prophecy and direct communion with the Deity, as it is taught in the Bible, Maimuni refused to accept, but explained them as subjective occurrences, as effects of an over-heated imagination, or as dream-phenomena. His doctrine of immortality was not less in contradiction with the belief of Talmudical Judaism. It denies the existence of a Paradise and a Hell, and represents the purified soul becoming fused with the original spirit. His method of explaining many ceremonial laws especially provoked contradiction, because, if accepted, these laws would lose their permanent value, and have only temporary importance. And, moreover, the manner in which Maimuni expressed himself on the Agada, a constituent part of the Talmud—which he either explained away or rejected—was in the eyes not only of the strict Talmudists, but also of more educated men, an heretical attack upon Judaism, which they believed it was their duty to energetically repel. Thus, besides enthusiastic worshippers of Maimuni, who religiously adopted his doctrine as a new revelation, there was formed a party, which assailed his writings, and combated particularly the “Guide to the Perplexed” (*Moré*), and the first part of his Code (*Madda*). The Rabbis, and generally the representatives of the Jewish congregations in Europe and Asia, con-

sequently became divided into Maimunists and opponents of Maimuni (Anti-Maimunists). The latter, being, as contemporaries, still full of the powerful impression which Maimuni's individuality and activity had produced, fully acknowledged his genius and piety, and blamed or criticised only his views, and the writings which contained them.

The opposition to his philosophical doctrines had begun already during Maimuni's life, but he responded only gently and modestly, and could not properly explain himself on account of the enthusiasm of his admirers. A young, intellectual, and learned man, MeİR ben Todros Halevi Abulafia, of Toledo (born about 1180, died 1244), had at an early period already shown signs of his religious objections to Maimuni's theory in a missive to the "wise men of Lünel," which was intended for publication. Maimuni's doctrine of Immortality forms the central point of Abulafia's attack. He made, however, but little impression by this letter. For although MeİR Abulafia, who was descended from a highly respectable family, enjoyed considerable authority, still his hostile attitude towards science, and his extreme views about keeping Judaism within iron bands, isolated him even in his own circle. Apart from this, he was possessed of overweening arrogance, a quality not calculated to win adherents and organise a party. Instead of finding supporters MeİR met with a sharp rebuff from Aaron ben Meshullam, of Lünel, who was learned in science and the Talmud, and a warm adherent of Maimuni. He charged him with presumption, in that he who was so unripe in years and wisdom should dare to pass an opinion on the greatest man of his time. The North French Talmudists, who detected truth in every letter of the Talmud, and would not permit innovations in its interpretations, alone thoroughly concurred with the inquisitor MeİR Abulafia, their leader being Samson of Sens,

so long as he remained in his native land. Meir was looked upon in his time as chief of the Obscurantists. The aged Sheshet Benveniste, of Barcelona, who remained a warm friend of free research to the last, composed a sarcastic epigram upon him :—

“ Friends, you ask why the name of the man of darkness
Has an ‘enlightening’ (Meir) sound, as he hates the light?
The sages also call the night ‘light’;
Such is the ambiguity of language.”

Another poet also directed the arrows of his wit in a satire against Abulafia, but its points are untranslatable. The Maimunists were generally vastly superior to their adversaries in the possession of knowledge and literary skill; they could expose the enemies of light to ridicule.

The hostility against Maimuni appeared also in the East, but not so strongly. A disciple of that Samuel ben Ali, who had conducted himself so maliciously against the sage of Fostat, named Daniel ben Saadiah, a learned Talmudist, had settled in Damascus, and was animated by the same spirit as his master against the Maimunist tendency, conceiving it his duty to pursue it with his hostility. Daniel, in the first place, impugned Maimuni’s Talmudical decisions to deprive him of the ground on which his commanding influence rested. For it was because Maimuni was a Rabbinical authority, that his philosophical and what his opponents called his heretical doctrines found such dangerous and general acceptance. Daniel, however, thought it advisable to maintain a respectful tone towards him; he even transmitted his polemic to Abraham Maimuni for examination. Afterwards Daniel allowed himself to make veiled attacks upon Maimuni’s orthodoxy in an exegetical composition, and remarkably enough reproached him for not believing in the existence of evil spirits. His main argument, however, was not strictly con-

cerned with the existence or non-existence of demons, but he sought to demonstrate that Maimuni having refused to acknowledge unconditionally, as correct and true, utterances which occur only once in the Talmud, was consequently a heretic. Maimuni's admirers, however, were so exasperated at these attacks of Daniel, that Joseph, Maimuni's favourite pupil, wanted to have his opponent visited with severe punishment. He urged Abraham Maimuni to pass sentence of excommunication on Daniel ben Saadiah. Abraham, however, who had inherited his father's love of justice and disinterestedness, would not hear of it. He expressed himself on the subject with meritorious impartiality. He did not think it right to excommunicate Daniel, whom he considered a religious man of refined belief, who had only made a mistake; moreover, he was a party in this controversy, and therefore did not feel himself empowered to denounce an antagonist in a matter that was to some extent personal. Maimuni's worshippers, and especially Joseph, were not, however, disposed to take the same view. They laboured to induce the Exilarch David of Mosul to exclude from the community the blameless and esteemed scholar of Damascus, until he humbly recanted his strictures upon Maimuni. Daniel was excommunicated and died of grief. From this time, all opposition to Maimuni became silent for a long time in the East. The Asiatic Jews were still so overpowered by the glamour of his name, that they could not think of denouncing him as a heretic. Nor were they learned enough to grasp the range of Maimuni's ideas, and to perceive their incompatibility with the spirit of the Talmud. It may be also that his admirer, Jonathan Cohen, who had emigrated to Palestine, had encouraged a leaning towards him among the pious, and had come off conqueror against the party of Samson of Sens, which was inimical to him.

Very different was the state of affairs in Europe, and especially in the South of France and Spain. Here Maimuni's theories had taken root and dominated the men of learning and most of the influential leaders of congregations; henceforth they regarded the Bible and Talmud only in the Maimunist light. The pious Jews of Spain and Provence endeavoured to solve the contradictions that they noted between Talmudical Judaism and Maimuni's system, by his method of interpretation. The less religious took the fact of this contradiction as a support for their lukewarmness in the performance of their religious duties, expressed themselves more freely about the Bible and Talmud, practically neglected many precepts, and were bent on reorganising Judaism on a rationalistic basis. Among the Jews of South Spain this lukewarmness towards the Law went so far that not a few contracted mixed marriages with Christian and Mahometan women. The excessively pious, whose whole life was absorbed in the Talmud, mistaking cause for effect, considered these distressing phenomena as a poisonous fruit of the philosophical seed, and prophesied the decay of Judaism if Maimuni's theories should gain the ascendancy. Nevertheless considerable time elapsed before anyone ventured to make a decisive stand against them. The North French Rabbis, who were of the same way of thinking as Samson of Sens, knew little of Maimuni's philosophical writings and their effects, while the South French and Spanish Rabbis, who were guided absolutely by the Talmud, may have thought it dangerous and useless to try to stem the overwhelming flood of free thought.

It was, therefore, looked upon as a most audacious step, when a Rabbi of the school which followed the Talmud with unquestioning faith openly and recklessly declared war against the Maimunists. This was Solomon ben Abraham, of Montpellier, a

pious, honourable man, and conversant with the Talmud, but of perverted notions, whose whole and entire world was the Talmud, beyond which nothing was worthy of credence. He and his friends conceived the Deity as furnished with eyes, ears, and other human organs, sitting in heaven upon a throne, surrounded by darkness and clouds. Paradise and Hell they painted with Agadic colours; the righteous were to enjoy, in the heavenly garden of Eden, the flesh of the Leviathan and old wine, stored up from the beginning of the world in celestial receptacles, and the godless, the heretics, the transgressors of the Law were to be scourged, tortured and burnt in hellish fire in Gehenna. The Rabbis of this school admitted a belief in the existence of evil spirits; it was in a manner an article of faith with them, for the Talmudical Agada recognises them as existing.

Adopting a theory so gross and anthropomorphic, Solomon of Montpellier could not help finding nearly every word in Maimuni's compositions un-Jewish and heretical. He felt it incumbent on him to make reply; he saw in the toleration of the Maimunist views the dissolution of Judaism, and he entered into the field against their exponents and champions. But with what weapons? The Middle Ages knew no more effective instrument to destroy ideas apparently pernicious than excommunication. It was attempted to compel men, who towered head and shoulders above their contemporaries, and held different opinions on religion from the thoughtless crowd, to seal up their ideas in themselves, or to recant them as vicious errors, by shutting them off from all intercourse with their co-religionists. At about the same time Pope Gregory had directed the University of Paris, the upholder of the free philosophical spirit till the coming of the Dominicans and Franciscans, to adhere strictly in its curriculum to the canon of the

Lateran Council, and on peril of excommunication, to avoid using those philosophical writings which had been interdicted by it. This precedent, and his bigoted, passionate nature, may have induced Solomon of Montpellier to introduce a censorship of thought also into the Jewish world, and to crush the Maimunist heresy by excommunication. But to appear single-handed against the Maimunists, whose numbers were large, and who ruled public opinion, could but ruin his cause. Solomon sought for allies, but could not find one single Rabbi in South France who was ready to take part in the denunciation of the Maimunist school. Only two of his pupils came to his side—Jonah ben Abraham Gerundi (the elder) of Gerona, a blind zealot like his master, and David ben Saul. These three pronounced the ban (at the beginning of 1232) against all those who read Maimuni's compositions, especially the philosophical parts (*Moré* and *Madda*), against those who occupied themselves with any studies except the Bible and Talmud, against those who distorted the plain literal sense of the Holy Writ, and generally against those who thought of expounding the *Agada* differently from Rashi. Solomon and his allies explained the reasons for their sentence of excommunication in a missive, and laid special stress on the point that Maimuni's line of argument undermined Talmudical Judaism. They did not hesitate more than once to vilify the venerated sage by name: if it were true that he had once lived strictly in accordance with the Talmud, yet instances were known in which still greater men became in their time renegades from the Law. Solomon from the beginning thought of invoking in case of emergency the secular power of the Christian authorities to aid him in oppressing free thought. For the present, however, he looked for supporters among the North French Rabbis. These, belonging as they all did to the acute

but one-sided Tossafist school, and having grown hoary in the Talmud, did not for a moment appreciate the necessity of establishing Judaism on a rational and scientific basis, mostly came over to Solomon's opinion, and took side against the Maimunists.

This excommunication, the proscription of science, and defamation of Maimuni, excited the most violent indignation of his worshippers. It seemed to them an unheard of audacity, an unparalleled impudence. The three chief congregations of Provence—Lünel, Beziers, and Narbonne—in which the Maimunists were in the ascendancy, rose in arms against this presumption of the Obscurantists, and on their side excommunicated Solomon and his two disciples, and hastened to send a missive to the other congregations of Provence bidding them unite in rescuing the honour of the great Moses. In Montpellier itself the congregation was divided into two parties; whilst the ignorant multitude remained by their Rabbi, the learned renounced their allegiance, and even violent affrays between them were not infrequent. The flame of discord grew more violent and spread over the congregations of Provence, Catalonia, Aragon, and Castile. The contest was carried on by both sides with intense passion, and not entirely with honourable weapons. Simple faith and a philosophical apprehension of religion, which had till then maintained friendly relations, now came to a conflict, which threatened to lead to a complete rupture and to sectarianism. The worst of it was, that the parties were both justified from their own points of views; both could appeal to old and respected authorities: the one maintained that the Bible and Talmud must be believed in without investigation and strained interpretation; the other, that reason also had a voice in religious matters.

Two men had a share in this passionate quarrel whose names are celebrated in Jewish literature:

David Kimchi and Nachmani. The former, already an old man and at the zenith of his fame as a grammarian and expositor of the Bible, belonged to the enthusiastic worshippers of Maimuni, and to the vindicators of free investigation. He was consequently an object of suspicion to the Obscurantists, and the North French Rabbis appear to have excommunicated him, because he had explained the vision of Ezechiel concerning the throne-chariot of God in a Maimunist sense, philosophically, and because he had maintained that the Talmudical controversies would have no signification in the Messianic period, or in other words, that the Talmud has no right to advance pretensions to perpetual authority. Kimchi accordingly took up the cudgels for Maimuni all the more promptly, as he had at the same time to defend his own cause. Old and weak as he was, he nevertheless did not hesitate to undertake a journey to Spain, in order personally to bring the the congregations of that country over to the side of the Provençals against Solomon of Montpellier.

Another man of commanding influence in this struggle was Moses ben Nachman, or Nachmani (Ramban) Gerundi, a contemporary fellow-citizen and relative of Jonah Gerundi (born about 1195, died about 1270). Nachmani, or as he was called in the language of the country, Bonastruc de Porta, was a man of sharply-defined and strongly-marked individuality, with all the strength and weakness of such a mind. Whilst of purely moral temperament, and conscientious piety, mild disposition and acute understanding, he was completely governed by the belief in submission to authority. The "wisdom of the sages" appeared to him unsurpassed and unsurpassable, and their clear utterances were neither to be doubted nor criticised. "He who occupies himself with the teachings of the sages, drinks old wine," was Nachmani's firm conviction. The whole wisdom of the later genera-

tions, according to his view, consisted entirely in fathoming the meaning of their great ancestors, to acquire a knowledge of it, and derive precedents from it. Not only the Holy Writ in its entire scope, and not only the Talmud in its entire range, but even the Geonim and their immediate disciples till Alfassi, were for him infallible authorities, offering an exemplar for all one's actions. Within this compass he had intelligent notions, correct judgments, and a clear mind, but beyond this compass he could not proceed and still less could he start from an original standpoint. Nachmani was a physician, and had therefore studied science a little; he was learned in other branches, and familiar with philosophical literature. But metaphysical speculation, to which he would not or could not apply himself, remained strange to him. The Talmud was for him all in all; in its light he regarded the world, the events of the past and the shaping of the future. Already in his youth the study of the Talmud and the vindication of assailed authorities were Nachmani's favourite occupation. About his fifteenth year (1210) he elaborated several Talmudical treatises entirely after Alfassi's model, and even in his style.

In these works he shows such an astounding intimacy with the Talmud that no one would recognise them as the production of a youth. They bear the stamp of complete maturity, show command over the subject, and reveal profound acumen. Not less splendid in its way was his second youthful work, in which he sought to justify Alfassi's Talmudical decisions in respect of the tractate dealing with the civil and marriage laws against the attack of Serachya Halevi Gerundi.

Nachmani had already commented upon several Talmudical tractates, and continued this labour indefatigably, till he had furnished the greatest portion of the Talmud with explanations (Chidushim).

Important as Nachmani's contributions may be in this province, they are in no wise creative. The Talmud had been investigated too thoroughly in the centuries since Rashi and Alfassi, for Nachmani, or indeed any one else, to be able to establish anything absolutely new. Maimuni had seen clearly with the insight of a comprehensive mind, that it was at length time to finally close accounts with commentaries on the Talmud, and to declare for or against, and bring the whole to a settlement. Nachmani did not pay attention to this task; Maimuni's gigantic religious Code did not exist for him.

If he did not sympathise with Maimuni in regard to the treatment of the Talmud, still less did he agree with him in regard to his philosophical views on religion. Maimuni proceeded from philosophy, and everywhere applied the test of reason to the estimation of Judaism. Nachmani, on the other hand, like Jehuda Halevi, took as his starting point the facts of Judaism, including even the narratives of the Talmud. For Maimuni the miracles of the Bible were an object of dissatisfaction, and he endeavoured as much as possible to reduce them to natural events; the Talmudical miracles he would not discuss. For Nachmani, on the other hand, the belief in miracles was the foundation of Judaism, on which the three pillars of his structure rested: the creation from nothing, the omniscience of God, and the divine providence. But, although Nachmani shunned philosophy, he nevertheless erected new theories which, if not demonstrated by logical formulæ, none the less made pretensions to authority. The ethical philosophy, which Maimuni adopted, aimed at elevating man above the accidents of life, by reminding him of his higher origin and his future bliss, and arming him with equanimity to render him insensible as much to pleasure as to pain. Nachmani, from

his Talmudical standpoint, could not sufficiently combat this philosophical or stoical indifference and apathy, and opposed to it the doctrine of Judaism, that "man is to rejoice on the day of joy, and weep on the day of sorrow." Maimuni assumed, with the philosophers, that the sensual instincts are a disgrace to man, since he is destined to a spiritual life. Nachmani was a strenuous opponent of this view. Since God, who is perfect, has created the earthly world, it must be good as it is, and nothing in it should be regarded as decidedly objectionable and hateful.

Nachmani, who thus started from quite different principles, had consequently but very few points of contact with Maimuni. Had they been contemporaries they might have been attracted to one another on account of this very dissimilarity. If Judaism was for Maimuni a cult of the intellect, for Nachmani it was a religion of the feelings. According to the former, there was no secret in Judaism which could not be disclosed through thinking; according to the other, just the mystical and unknown was the holiest part of Judaism, and was not to be profaned by reflection. The contrast of their different modes of thinking is especially characterised in the opposing positions they took up in regard to the belief in demons. According to Maimuni, it is not only superstition but even heathenism to ascribe power to evil spirits. Nachmani, on the other hand, was firmly attached to this theory, and allowed the demons considerable place in his system of the world. Whilst he expressed his disapproval of Maimuni's views only now and again, paying him at the same time the most unbounded respect, he had a decided antipathy towards Ibn-Ezra. This exegetist, with his sceptical smile, his biting wit, and his scorn for mystery, was just calculated to repel Nachmani. In his attacks upon him he could not preserve the serenity of his temper, but

used violent expressions against Ibn-Ezra, regarding him as the supporter of unbelief. But though Nachmani waged war against the philosophy of his age as destructive of revealed Judaism, and denounced Aristotle as the teacher of error, he nevertheless looked with disfavour on merely blind belief, and on the exclusion of every rationalistic conception in religious matters. In this position he separated himself from the North French Rabbis, whose strictly Talmudical tendency he otherwise followed. He was too much a son of Spain, which was in a manner enveloped by an atmosphere of philosophy, to be able to dismiss metaphysical research with contempt. With his clear mind and his Spanish education, Nachmani could not follow the North French Rabbis through thick and thin, nor accept the Agadas in their literal sense, with all their anthropomorphic and offensive utterances. But in this point he came into contradiction with himself. Reject the Agadic statements *in toto* he could not, for he was too strongly dominated by his belief in submission to authority, and respect for the Talmud. If, when constrained by necessity, he explained here and there that many Agadic sayings were to be considered only as rhetorical metaphors, as sermons, which it was not a religious obligation to believe in, he must not be taken in full earnest. But, if the Agada is not to be believed in literally, it must be interpreted. This, however, was to make concessions to the Maimunist school. Accordingly, there was no other method of escape from this dilemma than for Nachmani to admit that the Agada was to be explained, but to deny that Maimuni's mode of explaining it was correct. Then there came to him in excellent stead, a new secret lore which also claimed to spring into being as a primitive divine tradition, the Kabbala, which set at rest his embarrassment in respect of the obnoxious Agadas.

This mystical theory, which, from the point of view of the literalists, appears on the surface blasphemous, or at least meaningless and childish, for him had a deep, mysterious, and enormous importance. Nachmani, however, hesitated to justify the perverse notion that the whole text of the Torah was to be considered as made up of letters, out of which mystical names of God might be composed.

At the time when the sentence of excommunication was uttered against Maimuni's philosophical writings, Nachmani was not yet forty years old, but already possessed such importance that even the haughty Meïr Abulafia paid him the tribute of his respect. He could, therefore, as Rabbi of the congregation of Gerona, support with his voice either the one party or the other. He decided in favour of his friend Solomon and his nephew Jonah. As soon as he learnt that the former was excommunicated by the community of Provence, even without being properly informed of the whole affair, he hastened to send a missive to the communities of Aragon, Navarre, and Castile, saying in substance that they should not be carried away by the "pseudo-holy false" Maimunists; but that they should wait till the opposite party had spoken their mind. Nachmani indeed regretted in this letter that the unity of Judaism, which from time immemorial had been maintained in all countries of the dispersion, should, through the controversy which had broken out, threaten to succumb to a far-reaching rupture, and he recommended, on that account, prudence and calm deliberation. He himself, however, did not maintain this impartial attitude, but inclined more to the side of the party hostile to science. "If the French masters, at whose feet we sit, obscure the sunlight at heat of day, and cover the moon, they may not be contradicted;" thus he expresses himself at the very commencement.

But the majority of the congregations of Spain

refused to be led into darkness. The chief congregation of Aragon, with their leader, the physician-in-ordinary and favourite of the King Jayme, Bachiel Ibn-Alkonstantini, at their head, declared itself decisively in favour of Maimuni, and laid Solomon and his two allies under the ban, as long as they continued in their perverseness. Bachiel, his brother Solomon, and ten other influential men and leaders, sent a letter (Ab—August, 1232) to the congregations of Aragon, urging them to join their party, and repudiate those men “who have dared to appear against that great power which has rescued us from the floods of ignorance, error and folly.” The Saragossa Maimunists pointed out with success that the opponents of science had put themselves in opposition to the Talmud. “Our sages teach us that we should philosophically bring home to our mind the unity of God. We ought to be acquainted with profane sciences, in order to know how to reply to the enemies of religion. Astronomy, geometry, and other branches which are so important to religion, we cannot learn out of the Talmud. The great doctor of the Talmud, Samuel, said of himself, ‘that he knew the courses of the stars as well as the streets of his native place.’ From these remarks it was evident that it is a religious duty to acquire general knowledge. And now there appear three corrupters and misleaders of the people, who stain the reputation of the great Maimuni, wish to lead the communities into darkness, and forbid the reading of his philosophical writings, and the learning of science generally.” Bachiel Ibn-Alkonstantini, as the most influential man in Aragon, in an accompanying letter, summoned the congregations to strenuously oppose those who do not believe in God and his servant Moses (Maimuni). In consequence of this action the four great congregations of Aragon—Huesca, Monzon, Calatayud and Lerida—agreed with the Saragossa

congregation to pass the sentence of excommunication upon Solomon and his two supporters. The eyes of the Maimunists and their adversaries were, however, turned to the congregation of Toledo, which was the largest, richest, most important and most educated in Spain. Their decision was able to incline the balance in favour of either the one side or the other. Here Jehuda bar Joseph, of the highly influential family of Ibn Alfachar, who was probably physician-in-ordinary of King Ferdinand III., possessed the greatest authority. Hitherto he had not given his opinion either on Maimuni's side or on that of the Provençals, but had observed a discreet silence. Thereupon the zealous Rabbi of Toledo, Meïr Abulafia Halevi, the old antagonist of the Maimunist tendency, loudly raised his voice. He replied to the missives of Nachmani and of the Gerona congregation; they might make their minds easy, that he and his friends would chastise the "law-defiers of Provence." There were certainly not a few in the congregation of Toledo who were infatuated by Maimuni and his philosophical writings. He could by no means alter their mind, but should they declare themselves against Solomon of Montpellier, he would repudiate them altogether, and acknowledge no community with them. For he considered Solomon's action a meritorious one. He himself had long recognised the dangerous character of the doctrines laid down in Maimuni's "Guide to the Perplexed"; they certainly strengthen the ground of religion, but destroy the branches; they repair the breaches of the building, but tear down the enclosures. "The exalting of God's name was repeatedly on their lips, but there was also poison and death lurking on their tongues." He had always kept himself remote from this groundless heresy, and had sent a letter to the Lünel community more than thirty years since, to counteract the

enthusiasm for Maimuni, but his effort had been fruitless.

Besides this heavy-armed conflict of the two parties, with counter denunciations of heresy and fulminations of sentences of excommunication, there was carried on a light skirmish with sarcastic caricatures in verse. An opponent of Maimuni's "Guide" and his adherents threw off the following satire :—

"Silence, be dumb, leader of the blind ! Thy teachings are disregarded :

It is sinful to pervert the Holy Writ into a poem, and the gift of prophecy into a dream."

Whereupon a Maimunist retorted :—

"Silence, close thy mouth thyself, thou fool of fools ;
Thy understanding is as dense to poetry as to truth."

Another epigram condemns Maimuni himself :—

"Son of Amram, be not angry that the offender is called like thee.
Is it not usual to call alike spirit, what is holy and what but lies ?"

The Maimunists, however, were much more energetic than their opponents; they used all their efforts, on the one hand, to alienate the French Rabbis from Solomon; on the other, to bring the chief congregation of Spain over to their side. A young scholar, Samuel ben Abraham Saporta, directed a missive to the French Rabbis, and tried to persuade them that in their eagerness to support Solomon, they had taken a precipitate step in denouncing Maimuni and the followers of his views as heretics. "Before you passed a judgment upon it, you ought to have examined the contents of his writings properly; but it appears that you know nothing about the writings which you have condemned. Your business is the Halacha, to elaborate the determinations of actions forbidden and permitted by religion. Why do you venture beyond your province to express an opinion on

questions about which you know nothing at all? In your manipulating with letters like the heathens, you imagine the Deity in human form. What right have you to call us heretics who remain as firm as you to the Torah and Tradition?" Saporta's missive, in addition to other influences, made such a deep impression upon some of the French Rabbis that they renounced Solomon. They soon gave occasion to the Provençal congregations to know of their change of opinion. This change was undoubtedly due in great measure to Moses, of Coucy (born about 1200, died about 1260), one of the youngest Tossafists, who, although brother-in-law of Samson of Sens, and pupil of the over-pious Sir Leon of Paris, nevertheless cherished a great reverence for Maimuni, and made his Halachic works the subject of his study. Nachmani was extremely vexed at this change of opinion, and, as he was sorely distressed at the widening of the breach, he elaborated a scheme for a reconciliation, which seemed to him calculated to restore peace, and wrote a full, well-meant, but bombastic letter to the French Rabbis. He first of all expressed his dissatisfaction with them for having put the readers of Maimuni's compositions under the ban. "But if you were once of the opinion that it was incumbent on you to denounce as heresy the works of Maimuni, why does a portion of your flock now recede from this decision as if they regretted the step? Is it right in such important matters to act at one's own discretion? To-day to applaud the one, to-morrow the other?"

Finally, Nachmani explained his plan for effecting an accommodation. The ban against the philosophical portion of Maimuni's Code was to be revoked; but, on the other hand, the condemnation of the study of the "Guide," and of the rejectors of the Talmudical exposition of the Bible was to be strengthened. This sentence of excommunication

was not to be passed indiscriminately ; but, on the contrary, the Provençal Rabbis, and even Maimuni's son, the pious Abraham, might be invited to support it with their authority. In this manner the gate would be closed to disaffection and unbelief. Nachmani, however, ignored the fact that the assailed compositions were all of one cast, so that it was not possible to anathematise the one and canonise the other. Nachmani fell into the mistake of thinking that it was possible to check the flow of the spirit of free philosophical inquiry. The two tendencies, each legitimate in its way, could not but be in conflict with one another, and the struggle had to be protracted, and could not be ended by a compromise. Consequently, the fight continued on both sides, and Nachmani's proposal was utterly disregarded. The longer it lasted, the more the controversy inflamed men's feelings and drew more participants into the arena.

The aged David Kimchi wished to undertake a journey to Toledo, in order to induce that great congregation to join his party against Solomon and his adherents, and through their weight to completely crush their opponents. When he arrived at Avila, he became so ill that he had to abandon the journey, but on his bed of sickness wrote with trembling hand, through his nephew, to the chief representative of the Toledo congregation, Jehuda Ibn Alfachar. He blamed him for his obstinate silence in an affair which stirred the French and Spanish communities so deeply, and importuned him to persuade his congregation to make common cause with the Maimunists. Unfortunately, however, for him, he had come to the wrong man ; Jehuda Alfachar made up his mind decisively against the Maimunists. He had thoroughly mastered Maimuni's system, and had concluded that, if carried to its logical conclusion, it was calculated to subvert Judaism. Ibn Alfachar was a thought-

ful man, and of more penetration than Nachmani. The defects of Maimuni's theory were quite palpable to him, but even he was misled by the delusion that it was possible to exorcise the spirit of free-thought by anathemas. Alfachar paid such deference to the sentence of excommunication uttered by the French Rabbis, that at first he would not reply to Kimchi at all, but when ultimately he decided to do so, he treated him in his answer in so repellent a manner, that the Maimunists who were expecting the support of Toledo, were quite disconcerted at the result.

In the meantime, the sympathy of such influential personages as Alfachar, Nachmani, and Meir Abulafia, proved to be of little value to Solomon's cause. The feeling of the people in his native place and in Spain was against him. The French Rabbis, on whose support he had mostly reckoned, continually retreated from a controversy, the range of which they came to know only later on, and which threatened to expose the participators to peril. Solomon of Montpellier complained that no one stood on his side besides his two disciples, but the maladroitness with which he conducted his cause was chiefly responsible for the want of sympathy that he encountered. Thus forsaken by all, and hated most bitterly in his own congregation, he resolved on a step which led to the most deplorable results, not only to his own party, but to the whole Jewish people.

Pope Gregory IX., who was eager to extirpate the remnant of the Albigensian heretics in Provence, root and branch, about this time established the permanent Inquisition (April, 1233), and appointed the violent Dominican friars as inquisitors, since the Bishops, who had till then been entrusted with the persecution of the Albigenses, did not seem to him to treat the heretics with sufficient severity. In all the large towns of South France where there were

Dominican cloisters, in Montpellier among others, there were erected bloody tribunals, which condemned heretics or those only suspected of heresy, and often quite innocent people, to life-long imprisonment or to the stake.

With these confederates of murder, the Rabbi Solomon, the upholder of the Talmud and of the literal interpretation of the Holy Writ, associated himself. He and his disciple Jonah said to the Dominicans: "You burn your heretics, persecute also ours. The majority of the Jews of Provence are perverted by the heretical writings of Maimuni. If you cause these writings to be publicly and solemnly burnt, your action will have the effect of frightening the Jews away from them." They also read dangerous passages from Maimuni's compositions to the inquisitors, at which the infatuated monks must have felt a shudder of holy horror. The Dominicans and Franciscans did not wait to be invited twice to interfere. The Papal Cardinal-Legate, who was of the same fanatical zeal as Gregory IX., promptly took up the matter. The Dominicans may have feared that the fire of the Maimunist heresy might set their own houses ablaze. For the "Guide" had been translated by an unknown scholar into Latin already in the first half of the thirteenth century. This translation was probably done in South France, where Maimuni's philosophical composition had its second home, and where educated Jews also knew Latin well. Maimuni might with justice appear to the guardians of Catholic orthodoxy to have incurred damnation for his religious philosophy. Thinking about religion in those days was looked upon in official Christendom like committing a capital sin. If the inquisitors had already possessed at that time power over the persons of Jews, the Maimunists would have fared ill indeed; as it was, the persecution extended

only to parchment. Maimuni's works, at least in Montpellier, were hunted up in the Jewish houses and publicly burnt. In Paris also, Maimuni's antagonists caused a stake to be kindled for the same purpose, and the fire is said to have been taken from a taper on the altar of one of the principal churches. The enemies of Judaism congratulated themselves that confusion now prevailed in the midst of the Jews, who till then had been united and compact, and thought that they were witnessing their decay. The anti-Maimunists, however, were not yet satisfied. Confident in the support of those in power, they calumniated their opponents before the authorities, so that many members of the congregation of Montpellier were placed in great danger.

These proceedings, as was natural, excited the horror of all the Jews on both sides of the Pyrenees. Solomon and his partizans were assailed with general condemnation. To invoke the aid of the temporal power, and moreover of a clergy which was swollen with hatred of the Jews, to persecute them, was justly considered in the Jewish world as the most outrageous treachery. And in addition, to make the Dominicans judges of what was consistent or not with Judaism, appeared to the Jews just as unpardonable as to introduce the heathen enemy into the Holy of Holies of the Temple. Samuel Saporta wrote on the subject to the French Rabbis, in a letter full of irritation. Abraham ben Chasdaï of Barcelona, an enthusiastic worshipper of Maimuni, who had already censured Jehuda Alfachar for his insulting treatment of Kimchi, and for his championing the cause of Solomon, together with his brother dispatched a missive denouncing Solomon's action in unmeasured terms to the communities of Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and Leon. When Kimchi, who was already in Burgos on his journey home, heard of this affair, he inquired of

Alfachar, whether he still thought of keeping the informer and traitor under his protection. The intelligent followers of the latter, Nachmani and Meir Abulafia, were deeply abashed, and remained silent. By public opinion, Solomon and the cause he represented were already condemned. A poet of the Maimunist party composed on this occasion a very fine epigram:—

“They have burnt the costliest books,
But the spirit they have failed to exorcise with it.
A purifying fire is their teaching :
How could the flame consume the fire?
Like Tishbi in the fiery chariot,
They were only taken up to heaven, like angels, in flames.”

The system of informing in Montpellier through false witnesses, to which the adherents of Maimuni were exposed, was put an end to by mysterious contrivances behind the scenes. More than ten of Solomon's partisans, who had been convicted of slander against their enemies, were punished in the cruellest manner. Their tongues were cut out. But rarely does the gloom clear up in which these incidents are veiled. What became of Solomon, the originator of all these events, is uncertain. The Maimunists observed with a certain malicious joy the severe punishment of their adversaries in Montpellier. A poet, probably Abraham ben Chasdaï, wrote an epigram upon it, which was soon in everyone's mouth:—

“Against the guide of Truth,
A false pack raised their voices.
Punishment overtook them ;
Their tongue was directed to heaven,
Now it lies in the dust.”

With this tragic issue the struggle was still far from being at an end. The parties were more than ever embittered against one another.

When Abraham Maimuni learnt with indignation of the persecution of his father, and the sad

termination of the conflict which had broken out (January, 1235), he wrote a little book on the subject, entitled "War for God" (Milchamot), in order to repel the attack upon the orthodoxy of his father, and denounce the conduct of his opponents. This composition, directed in the form of a letter to Solomon ben Asher (in Lünel?) justified Maimuni's system on Maimuni's lines, and has no other value beyond the historical data it affords.

Solomon's endeavour to silence the free spirit of research in the province of religion was thus overthrown, and had met a lamentable end. Another French Rabbi, of mild character and gentle piety, devised a new method of procedure, which succeeded better. Moses of Coucy, who, although greatly attracted towards the Tossafist tendency, had held Maimuni in high esteem, undertook the task of fortifying the drooping spirit of religion among the Provençals and Spaniards by delivering sermons and spirited exhortations. Moses was undoubtedly inspired in his attempt by the example of the preacher-monks, who aimed at overcoming the disbelief in the Roman Church by preaching from village to village, and who, to some extent, succeeded. In the same manner the Rabbi of Coucy travelled from one congregation to another in South France and Spain (1235), and was accordingly called the "preacher." But there was an important difference between the Jewish expounder of the Law and the Catholic order of preachers. The one acted in genuine simplicity of heart, without any ambitious after-thoughts, with mildness on his lips and mildness in his heart. The Dominicans, on the other hand, put on their humility and poverty only for show, for behind there lurked the devil of arrogance. They flattered their patrons in sermons, and humiliated their opponents unsparingly; gained inheritances surreptitiously, and filled their cloisters with treasures, nourished a

bloody fanaticism, and strove after power and authority.

Moses of Coucy succeeded on his side, in bringing many thousands who had neglected several rites (Tephillin), or had never observed them, to repentance and atonement, and in persuading them to remain constant to their practice. In Spain he even effected that those who had contracted mixed marriages with Christian or Mahometan women, should dissolve them, and divorce themselves from their strange wives (1236.) It was, of course, not only his sermons which brought about this sudden conversion, but the superstitious fear of evil dreams and extraordinary phenomena of heaven, by which at that time Jews and Christians were seized. Moses of Coucy in the meantime preached to his brethren not only to observe the ceremonies, but also to be truthful and upright in their dealings with non-Jews. In his pulpit he laid stress upon the virtue of humility, which was all the more becoming to the children of Israel, seeing that they should have God ever present before them, and He hates the proud and loves the meek. Far from kindling fanatical zeal, Moses ever took as his text peace and friendliness. He helped to soften matters by acknowledging Maimuni's greatness, and putting him on a level with the Geonim.

But evil consequences now began to develop within Judaism from this controversy in regard to the admissibility or worthlessness of free inquiry, the effects of which lasted for centuries, and even now have not died away. Maimuni aimed at investing Judaism with a character of solidarity absolutely free from doubt; he had sought to acquire for it transparent clearness and general simplicity, and only occasioned for it misfortune and complication. It was his ambition to establish peace, but he kindled war—so little could even the greatest of mortals calculate the consequences of his actions.

His system of philosophy had divided Judaism, and separated simple believers from thinking men, and had aroused a commotion, which in its violence far overstepped the borders of moderation. From the rupture that arose through the conflict for and against Maimuni there insinuated itself into the general life of the Jews a false doctrine which, although new, styled itself a primitive inspiration; although un-Jewish, called itself a genuine teaching of Israel; and, although springing from an error, entitled itself the only truth. The origination of this secret lore, which was called *Kabbala* (tradition), coincides with the time of the Maimunistic controversy, through which it was launched into existence. Discord is the mother of this dismal birth, which has always been an instrument for causing schism. The *Kabbala* in its first systematic appearance is a child of the first quarter of the thirteenth century. The earlier adherents of this secret science when asked on their conscience from whom they first received it, used to answer in plain terms: "From Rabbi Isaac the blind, or at least from his father Abraham ben David of Posquières, the antagonist of Maimuni." They frankly confessed that the Kabbalistic doctrine does not occur either in the Pentateuch or in the Prophets, in the Hagiography or in the Talmud, but rests on scarcely any perceptible indications. Of the Kabbalistic utterances of this founder of the *Kabbala*, Isaac the blind (flourished about 1190—1210), there are extant only fragments, from which but little can be inferred. What he lacked physically, his inner vision supplied him. He adopted the Metempsychosis, which had been so condemned and ridiculed by Jewish thinkers, as an article of faith. His pupils related of him, that he had the power of distinguishing in men whether they possessed a new and fresh soul, originating from the world of

heavenly spirits, or an old one which was migrating from body to body, and had again to recover its purity. Two of his disciples, Azriel and Ezra, were the first who reduced the Kabbala to a coherent system. They were so like-minded, that they have often been confounded with one another, and the same writings and doctrines have at one time been ascribed to the one, at another to the other. These twins in thought, perhaps brothers in blood, are consequently reckoned in the history of the Kabbala as only one person; they complement one another.

But little is known of the events of the life of this pair, and it is reported of one of them (it is again uncertain whether Ezra or Azriel) that he died at the age at least of seventy, a few years after the commencement of the Maimunist schism. Of Azriel, rather more has transpired. He relates how, from his earliest youth, he travelled about from place to place, in search of a secret wisdom, which could give satisfactory conclusions about God and Creation. Certain men, who were in possession of this lore, had taught it to him, and he was firmly convinced of its truth. He had, therefore, himself unfolded this Kabbalistic doctrine among the congregations which he visited during his wanderings; but was laughed to scorn by the philosophical scholars in Spain (Sevilla?). Thus one of the earliest mystics confessed that the Kabbala had met with opposition at the very outset of its career, and that the antiquity of its subject-matter was emphatically denied. Azriel and Ezra, however, did not allow themselves to be disturbed by this opposition, but laboured to make good their position and spread their doctrines. They developed their peculiar theory in their explanations of passages in the Agada, the prayers, and the Song of Solomon, which is a mine for every kind of mysticism. Azriel endeavoured also to bring over philosophical scholars to a belief in the truth of

the Kabbala, and accommodated it to the language of logic. But as the secret lore stepped out of its obscurity into the light of the sun, it betrayed its nakedness and deformity. So much is certain, that the Kabbala was intended as a counterblast to the growing shallowness of the Maimunists' philosophy. That Judaism should teach nothing farther than Aristotelian philosophy was an abomination to those whose deep piety regarded every word of the Bible and the Talmud as a divine truth. There is a way to free oneself entirely from the philosophical consideration of God and Judaism, and to receive everything in naïve faith. This way was started by the German and North French Jews; it was the rigid Tossafist method. But the South French and Spanish pious people, who in a manner breathed everywhere an atmosphere of philosophy, could not be satisfied with dull literalness. Judaism appeared to them without meaning if not permeated with deep thought. The religious enjoinders of the Law, the ceremonies, must have a higher ideal sense. So much the anti-Maimunists themselves had admitted, that the precepts of Judaism could on no account be accepted as arbitrary decrees of a despot, but, being divine ordinances, must have an intelligent basis. And as with the apparently meaningless laws of the Bible, and the obscure verses of Scripture, the Agadic utterances of the Talmud must also contain a higher sense, otherwise they would be without rhyme or reason. The Kabbala is a daughter of embarrassment; its system was an outlet by which to escape from the dilemma between the naïve, anthropomorphistic interpretation of the Bible and the shallowness of the Maimunist system.

The secret doctrine first completely developed by Ezra and Azriel thus erected, not a new, but at any rate a peculiar philosophy of religion, or, more correctly, theosophy, which, advancing

from one inconceivability to another, finally soared into the region of the clouds, where all thinking ceases, and even the imagination has to drop its wings. It started from a basis which at that time was considered unimpeachable, but made bold deductions on the strength of it, which again clashed with its underlying principle. Unity was transformed, by certain manipulations, into a plurality, spirituality into a coarse materialism, refined belief into gloomy superstition. The original Kabbala established the following principles: the Deity is elevated above everything, even above existence and thought. Consequently, we have no right to say of Him that He speaks or acts, and still less that He thinks, wills and designs. All these qualities, which adorn man, imply some limitation, and God is unlimited, because perfect. Only one attribute can be assigned to Him—Illimitation and Infinity. The Kabbala accordingly confers on God the title of Unlimited or Eternal (Hebrew, En-Sof). This was its first innovation. In His unthinkable universality, God, or the En-Sof, is concealed and hidden, incapable of recognition, and consequently is in a manner non-existent; for that which cannot be recognised and conceived by the thinking mind is not in existence in regard to it. The universal existence, the En-Sof, consequently is identical with the non-existent (Ayin). Therefore, in order to announce His existence, the Deity was bound or wished to make Himself visible and recognisable; He had to be productive and to create, that His existence might be perceived.

But the lower world in its depravity and decrepitude could not have been produced or created by the En-Sof, for the Infinite and Perfect cannot directly bring into existence the finite and imperfect. The Deity, therefore, is not to be regarded as the immediate Creator of the world; the process of

creation must be realised in quite a different manner. The En-Sof, by means of His endless wealth of light, radiated from Himself a spiritual substance, a force, or whatever it is to be called, which, as flowing directly from Himself, partakes of His perfection and infinity. On the other hand, this radiation or emanation cannot be like the En-Sof, its Creator, in all points, for it is not absolutely original, but derivative. This power, springing from the En-Sof, is, therefore, not identical with Him, but only similar to Him, *i.e.*, it has besides an infinite, also a finite side. The Kabbala calls this first spiritual child of the En-Sof the first Sefira, a name possibly adopted as suggestive at once of number and sphere. This first spiritual power radiates again a second force, and this latter again a third, so that the Deity revealed in all ten spiritual substances, or forces, or intermediate entities, or organs (in such indefiniteness are they described). These ten powers the Kabbala calls the Ten Sefirot.

The ten substances form a strict unity with one another and with the En-Sof, and only represent different sides (or phases) of one and the same entity, as fire produces at once flame and sparks, which, although appearing different to the eye, nevertheless indicate one and the same thing. The Ten Sefirot, which are distinguished from one another as the different colours of the same light, are as emanations of the Deity dependent on one another, and consequently limited. Only in so far as the En-Sof endows them with abundance of force, can their effect be endless. This power is shown in the creation by the spheres of the world of souls and bodies, and indeed in their own image. Besides, they never cease to support the world with which they are in union, and convey to it the gracious gift of divine life.

The Kabbala comprises all the ten Sefirot, in three groups of three each. Thus nine Sefirot

would have been sufficient ; but the Kabbala could not forego the number ten ; it was too important. The Ten Commandments, the Ten Declarations, by means of which the Agada explains the creation of the universe, the Ten Spheres, what a world of meaning is therein hidden. The Kabbala was bent on keeping the tenth power, but could not consistently introduce it into its list, however much it might eschew strict logic ; hence it floundered into a variety of conceptions. Close thinking is no concern of the Kabbala ; it is satisfied with fantastic pictures and names, however inconceivable. With this number ten the Kabbala sported in a most arbitrary manner. By means of the Sefirot, God can make Himself visible, or even corporify Himself. When then it is said in the Holy Writ : God spoke, descended to the earth, ascended ; it is not to be understood, as the strict literalists or the Agadists take it, as referring to the Deity Himself, or to the highly elevated En-Sof, but to the Sefirot. The incense which mounted from the altar and became sweet savour, was not inhaled or absorbed by the Deity himself, but by the intermediary beings. In this manner the Kabbala thought it had overcome the difficulties which the notion of the absolute spirituality of God and the Biblical method of representation offer. The Deity is as incorporeal as infinite, has no corporeal functions, and is not affected by anything corporeal. But the Sefirot, since, in addition to their infinite side, they have also a finite, and in a manner, corporeal side, can perform also corporeal functions, and have relations with corporeal things.

Their theory of the Creation is as fantastic as their spirit-world. God, or the En-Sof, did not create the visible world immediately, but entirely by means of the Sefirot. All things, not only general but also individual, in the lower world consequently have their original form (Types) in the

higher worlds, so that nothing is here without a purpose, but everything has a higher signification. The whole universe resembles a giant tree possessing a wealth of branches and leaves, whose roots are constituted by the Sefirot; or it is a closely connected chain, the last link of which hangs on to the higher world; or a great sea, which is constantly filled by a source eternally pouring itself out. In particular, the human soul is a fully privileged citizen of the higher world, and is in immediate connection with all the Sefirot. Consequently it can exert some influence on them, and even on the Deity. By virtue of its moral and religious conduct the soul can further or hinder the gracious gifts from the Deity, through the channel of the intermediary beings. Through its good actions, it causes the uninterrupted flow of grace; through its bad actions, its stoppage.

The people of Israel were specially appointed to promote the fulness of grace, and therefore the preservation of the world. For that purpose they received the Revelation and the Law, with its 613 religious ordinances, in order to operate upon the Sefirot through every religious act, and in a manner to necessitate the dispensation of their bounty. The ceremonies consequently have a deeply mystical meaning and an imperishable importance: they constitute the magic means of supporting the whole universe and procuring for it grace. "The righteous man is the foundation of the world." The temple, and the sacrificial service especially, had a particularly important significance, to keep alive the connection of the lower world with the higher. The earthly temple corresponded with the heavenly temple (the Sefirot). The priestly blessing, which used to be pronounced with the ten fingers raised, prompted the Ten Sefirot to pour out their gracious gifts upon the lower world. After the destruction of the Temple prayer took the place of sacrifice,

and accordingly prayer has a peculiar mystical importance. The prescribed prayers have an inevitable effect, if the worshipper knows how to address himself on any particular occasion to the Sefira concerned. For prayer must be directed only to it, not immediately to the Deity. The secret of prayer assumes an important place in the Kabbala. Every word, even every syllable in the prayers, every movement made during worship, every ceremonial symbol used therein, the Kabbala interprets in relation to some incident in the higher world. The Kabbalists took a special interest in the mystical explanation of the religious laws of Judaism. It was the centre of gravity of their theory; by its means they could oppose the Maimonists. Whilst the latter, from their philosophical point of view, declared certain precepts to be meaningless and obsolete, the Mystics treated the same ordinances as of the highest moment. They were therefore considered as the preservers of Judaism.

The vital importance to Judaism of the doctrine of retribution and the inquiry into the condition of the soul after death had been too strenuously asserted by Maimuni for the Kabbala to omit to drag them also into the province of its theory. The Kabbala treated these questions in its own way, for which it naturally claimed a remote antiquity; but it could not conceal its youth and derivation from another circle of thoughts. Starting from its doctrine that all souls had been already created in the beginning in the world of spirits, the Kabbala taught that these souls were destined to enter upon an earthly career, to submerge themselves in bodies, and to remain connected with them for a certain period of time. The task of the soul in its earthly life was in a manner to undergo the test whether, in spite of its connection with the body, it could keep itself pure from earthly grossness. If it could do this, it ascended purified after death to the domain

of spirits, and participated in the world of the Sefirot. If, on the other hand, it became tainted with earthliness, it must return again to the bodily life (at the utmost not more than three times) till, through these repeated tests, it could soar aloft in a pure state. On the transmigration of the soul, an important point of the Kabbala, it based its doctrine of reward and punishment. The sufferings to which the pious, apparently without cause, are subjected on earth, serve the purpose of purifying their souls. God's justice, therefore, ought not to be questioned, if the righteous are unfortunate and the godless are prosperous. As most souls in their earthly existence become lost in sensuality, forget their heavenly origin, and therefore are rendered liable to migrations through new bodies, it happens that mostly souls, which have already been on earth, are born again, while new souls rarely come on earth. Through the sinfulness of man, which effects that the same souls repeatedly enter bodies, the great redemption is postponed. For the new souls cannot come into existence, the world being almost entirely pervaded by old ones. And the great time of grace, the spiritual completion of the world, cannot happen until all previously created souls are born in the earth. Even the soul of the Messiah, which like others abides in the spiritual world of the Sefirot in its pre-earthly existence, cannot appear until every soul has dwelt in a body. It will be the last of the souls, and the Messiah therefore will come only at the end of days. Then at length the great jubilee will arrive, when all souls purified and refined will return from earth to heaven. The furthering and hastening of this time of grace depends, therefore, on the righteous, on their intuition and religious conduct. The adepts in Kabbala thus acquired extraordinary importance; they were security, not only for Israel, but for the whole order of the world, for through their conduct they might

bring about the birth of the soul of the Messiah, the last in the storehouse of souls.

The Kabbala could boast that it had disclosed the secret of Judaism much further than Maimuni, and had authenticated its coherence with the higher world, and the destined shaping of things. In distortions of the Scriptures, the Kabbalists now left the Alexandrine allegorists, the Agadists, the Church Fathers, and the Jewish and Christian religious philosophers far behind. Azriel, at least, coquetted with philosophy, and endeavoured to make the Kabbala acceptable to thinkers. But another Kabbalist of this time, Jacob ben Sheshet Gerundi, of Gerona (who wrote about 1243 or 1246), deliberately ran counter with his secret lore to the explanations of the philosophers. He repudiated every truce with them, and could not find scorn enough for these philosophical “heretics and despisers of the Law.” Gerona, the native place of Ezra and Azriel, of Jacob ben Sheshet, and Nachmani, was the first warm nest for the Kabbala before it became fledged. This secret wisdom, which made its appearance with such a flourish, rests on nothing else than a deception, or at the best, on the self-deception of its founders. Its theory is not old, as it pretended, but very modern; or if old, still it does not date from Jewish antiquity, but from the time of the twilight of Grecian philosophy. The Kabbala is a caricature which distorts equally both Jewish and philosophical ideas. In order to make it appear more ancient and authentic, the compilers had recourse to fraud. Azriel in his turn composed a Kabbalistic manuscript in mystical style, and represented as his authority an honoured Talmudical doctor Nechunya ben Ha-Kana. In vain a much respected contemporary, Meïr ben Simon, in the name of the Rabbi Meshullam of Beziers, called attention to this forgery, which bore the title *Bahir* (Luminous), and con-

demned it to be burnt, as it contained blasphemies against the greatness of God. The book Bahir, nevertheless, obtained a footing, and was used as evidence of the great age of the Kabbala.

The labours of Azriel and Ezra towards promoting the study of the secret science might have achieved but poor results if Nachmani had not ranged himself under their banner. At the outset it is indeed hard to conceive how this clear, keen-witted, subtle thinker, who, in the province of the Talmud, had the ability to shed light upon every obscurity, could join in following the aberrations of the Kabbala so as to permit himself to be blinded by the false light of the Bahir, and become its supporter. But on deeper examination of his way of thinking this phenomenon ceases to be a paradox. Nachmani belonged to that numerous class of men who can form a correct judgment on single objects, but are unable to comprehend a great whole. Maimuni's philosophical line of argument repelled him on account of its prosaic nature; the Kabbala on the other hand attracted him because his belief in miracles and respect for authority found nourishment therein. When he, a pious Rabbi and deep Talmudist, had acknowledged the truth of the Kabbala, its authority was secured. Where Nachmani believed unconditionally, those less gifted than he shrank from doubting. A poet, Meshullam En-Vidas Dafiera, an opponent of the Maimunists, accordingly places him with Ezra and Azriel, as a defender of the truth of the secret lore.

“ Nachman's son is to us a mighty tower.
Ezra and Azriel's teaching is indubitable.
They are my priests, they illumine my altar;
They are my stars, which never cease to shine;
They know how to justify God's ways to man.
Only from fear of heretics they restrain their words.”

Thus Nachmani became a chief pillar of the Kabbala, the more so because he spoke of it only

casually, and concealed more of it than he revealed.

Thus, within barely four decades after the death of Maimuni, Judaism was divided into three parties ; and in this way was begun the retrograde movement which led to such confusion. A marked separation developed between the philosophical school, the strict Talmudists and the Kabbalists. The first-named, who regarded Maimuni as their chief, strove to interpret the doctrines of Judaism in a rational manner ; they either adhered to the arguments accepted by their leader or deduced from his premises, subtle conclusions which had escaped his notice, or which he did not desire to employ, and they almost entirely broke away from the Talmud. The strict Talmudists occupied themselves exclusively with Halachic controversies, and had no wish to become acquainted with philosophical notions : they were averse to science and to inquiry in the region of religion, and interpreted the Agadas in a purely literal sense : they also turned aside from the Kabbala. Lastly, the Kabbalists were as prejudiced against the literal Talmudists as against the rationalistic Maimunists. Still they continued at first on friendly terms with the Talmudists because their numbers were few, and they were not yet conscious of the conclusions, at variance with Judaism, which could be drawn from their system. Nevertheless, both had to combat a common enemy. The Kabbalists at first directed their attacks solely against the Maimunists. Before the end of the century, however, the Kabbalists and the Talmudists had become enemies ; and both parties mutually attacked each other, as strenuously as they did their common opponents, the philosophers.

The consequences which arose on the one hand from the Papal decree of degradation levelled against the Jews, and on the other from internal discord, soon made themselves felt, and produced

an unhappy condition of affairs. The happy contentment, the joyous condition of mind, the delight in existence, which, when combined with spiritual activity had borne such beautiful fruit, had all long since passed away. A sad earnestness filled the hearts of the Spanish and Provençal Jews, and weighed down as with lead every lofty aspiration of their souls. Joyful singers simultaneously became silent, as if the icy breath of the gloomy present had suddenly caused their warm blood to freeze. How could a Jew pour forth merry strains of song with the badge of dishonour on his breast? The neo-Hebraic poetry which for three centuries had produced such noble works of genius perished altogether or continued to bear only faded leaves. The satires and epigrams which the Maimunists and anti-Maimunists hurled against each other were the last products of the neo-Hebraic Muse of Spain. But these verses no longer bubbled over with laughter and merriment; they were full of earnest logic and argument. They no longer resembled prattling maidens as did the epigrams of the most flourishing era of poetry, but were like quarrelsome scolds who had lost the charm of youth. Poets themselves felt that the active power of the neo-Hebraic Muse had been exhausted, and merely lavished their genius on fond memories of its Golden Age.

The last representatives of the neo-Hebraic poetry were Jehuda Alcharisi, the untiring translator and warm partizan of Maimuni, then Joseph ben Sabara, and lastly Jehuda ben Sabbatai. These three men at one and the same time created the satirical form of romance, as if acting by mutual accord. This form consisted in the introduction of fictitious characters, and the use of an exuberant rhetoric, but there is more of strained attempts at wit than of graceful skill in their poems. Alcharisi in his romance, "Tachkemoni," under the disguise

of Heber the Kenite, and in dialogues with the poet, introduces many subjects both humorous and serious, intermingling rhymed prose with verse, and interweaving little episodes. This method was pursued in an exactly similar manner by the poet, Joseph ben Sabara (probably a physician in Barcelona) in his romance, "The Sources of Delight" (Shaashuim). The third poet of this class, Jehuda ben Isaac ben Sabbatai, also of Barcelona, was considered by Alcharisi himself to be one of the best masters of the art at that time. His performances, however, do not in any way justify this opinion. His dialogue, "Between Wisdom and Riches," is very poor in poetical ideas. His satirical romance, "The Woman-hater," is not much better, and he entirely lacked the broader conceptions of his contemporaries.

The decay of the neo-Hebraic poetry was very rapid. After the death of Sabbatai it fell into a yet more forlorn condition, and a century passed before a worthy follower of it made his appearance. As the active power of poetic production had died out, those who were acquainted with the manipulation of language, and knew how to construct tolerably good rhymes, strove to imitate former poetical works. Abraham ben Chasdaï, a Maimunist, of Barcelona, re-wrote, from an Arabic translation, a moral dialogue between a worldly-minded and a penitent man. This he put into a Hebrew form under the title of "The Prince and the Nazirite."

A poor copyist, Bërachya ben Natronaï Nakdan, called in the dialect of the country Crispia (flourished about 1230—1270), turned his attention to the poetical fables popular among the ancient Hebrews. He was, however, unable to invent any dramatic conversations between animals, but chiefly elaborated in the neo-Hebraic form the productions of earlier fabulists. Among his hundred and seven Fox-Fables (Mishlé Shualim) there are very few

original stories. Berachya desired to hold up a mirror to the gaze of his contemporaries, "who spurned the truth, and held forth the sceptre of gold to falsehood." Plants and animals were employed to depict the perversity and depravity of mankind.

The only merit possessed both by the Fables of Berachya, and Ibn Sahula, a minor poet of Northern Spain (1245), who also moralized in perfervid words in the "Fables of Ancient Times" (Mashal ha Kadmoni), as also by the moral tale, "The Prince and the Dervish" of Abraham ben Chasdaï, consists in the happy imitation of the Biblical style, and in the ingenious application of the verses of Scripture to an entirely different line of thought. This it is which, in the eyes of scholars, imparts to its language such an air of uncommon wit, attractiveness, and piquancy. It is doubtful whether Joseph Ezobi should be included among the poets of the time. It is showing too much honour to his writings to term them poetry; and they would necessarily be passed over when neo-Hebraic poetry is referred to, were it not that by frequent transcripts and the multiplication of copies in Latin and French translations, the attention of the historian of literature has been drawn to them, and they have acquired a certain amount of fame. Joseph Ezobi (or Esobi) ben Chanan, of Orange (near Avignon, about 1230—50), dedicated to his son Samuel an epithalamium, called, "The Silver Dish" (Kaarat Kesef), as a wedding gift, in which he laid down admonitions and regulations how to live. Among other things he commanded him "to hold himself aloof from the wisdom of the Greeks, which resembled the vine of Sodom, and only implanted the seeds of disease in a man's mind." He should pay much heed to the study of Hebrew grammar and of the Bible; but his chief object of attention should be the Talmud. This opinion alone characterises the man and the

bent of his mind. Joseph Ezobi's verses showed, indeed, a command of language, but they are deficient both in power of expression and yet more in grace; he belongs to those versatile poetasters who arose at this time in large numbers, especially in Provence.

The various branches of science degenerated in the post-Maimonic time even more than the art of poetry. How could a sound method of exegesis flourish in a place where both the philosophers and the Kabbalists emulated each other in subtilizing or even in misinterpreting the meaning of Holy Writ, so as to obtain some seeming Biblical support to their theories? Hebrew grammar at the same time also fell into decay, under the subtle quibblings of the philosophers and Kabbalists; the excellent productions of earlier days sank into oblivion. David Kimchi was the last exegetist and grammarian for a long space of time. Nachmani, it is true, occupied himself in the exposition of the Scriptures, and moreover very often called in the aid of grammar, and displayed traces of correct philological theory; he did not, however, cultivate these branches for their own intrinsic worth, but in the service of a predetermined explanation, especially in controverting the views of an opponent. Thus, the magnificent garlands of Jewish science that had been woven by the Jewish Spanish thinkers and inquirers after truth gradually faded away.

CHAPTER XVI.

INSIDIOUS DISCUSSIONS AND BURNING OF THE TALMUD.

Pope Gregory IX.—Emperor Frederick II. and the Jewish Scholars Jehuda Ibn Matka and Jacob Anatoli—The Jewish Legislation of Frederick of Austria—The Martyrs of Fulda and of Aquitaine—Louis the XI. of France and his Enmity to the Jews—Attacks on the Talmud—The Apostate Nicholas-Donin—Disputation at the French Court between Yechiel of Paris and Nicholas-Donin—The Martyrs at Frankfort—The Rabbinical Synod—The Church and Jewish Physicians—Moses Ibn Tibbon and Shem-Tob Tortosi—Papal Bull acquitting Jews of the Blood-accusation—The Last French Tossafists—The Jews of England—The Jewish Parliament—Alfonso the Wise and the Jews of Spain—Meïr de Malea and his Sons—The Jewish Astronomers Don Judah Cohen and Don Zag Ibn Said—The Jews of Aragon—De Penjaforte and the Apostate Pablo Christiani—The First Censorship of the Talmud—Nachmani's Disputation with Pablo—Influence of Nachmani—The Karaites.

1236—1270 C.E.

WHILST these internal divisions continued, the poisonous seed that had been scattered abroad by the Papacy was producing abundance of evil fruit. Persecutions of the Jews, which had hitherto only been carried on in isolated places, began to spread like a contagion, and became every year more violent and general. Innocent III., it is true, did not aim at the complete slaughter of the Jews, but only at their degradation. He desired to crush them down to a state lower than that of the rustic serfs, for which purpose the whole weight of the society of the Middle Ages, consisting of princes, nobles of a higher or lower rank, the clergy of every degree, citizens and peasants, was to bear heavily upon them, to afflict them grievously, and to reduce them to a most pitiable condition. The humiliation of the Jews afforded great pleasure to the lower grades

of the people, who were rejoiced to behold a class of human beings sunk yet lower than themselves, and against whom they could use their clumsy wit and rough fists. This people, which was branded with a distinguishing badge by the Church and society, was regarded by the ignorant mob as a race of outcasts, who might be put to death like filthy dogs, without any feeling of remorse. All sorts of crimes were attributed to the Jews, and credited. Fierce attacks on the Jews were repeated from time to time, and in various places, on the plea of child-murder, and with such an air of truth in the charge that even well-disposed Christians were filled with doubts, and were inclined to believe in the string of falsehoods. It happened once that the body of a Christian was found between Lauda and Bischofsheim (in Little Baden). Who were the murderers? Jews, of course. On this altogether groundless accusation, the Jewish men, women and children of both towns were attacked by the mob and the clergy, and, without being brought to trial, were put to death. On this occasion eight learned and pious men were brought up to answer for the presumed assassination of a Christian (on the 2nd and 3rd January, 1235); they were put on the rack, and, probably in consequence of the confessions wrung from them by the torture, they were executed. The plundering of Jewish houses was the invariable accompaniment of such massacres. The Jews in the neighbouring districts thereupon implored Pope Gregory IX. to grant them a charter, which might protect them against the arbitrary action of the murderous mob and the senseless knights. In reply, he issued a Bull to all Christendom (on the 3rd of May, 1235), which repeated and confirmed the Constitution of Pope Innocent III. It was the opinion of many persons that the Vicar of Christ had allowed himself to be induced to publish this Bull by a bribe of a large sum of money from the

Jews, which shows at how low an ebb was the idea of justice at that time. Meanwhile however, whether this Papal decree had emanated from an unbiassed impulse, or was the outcome of bribery, like many of the previous ones in favour of the Jews, it remained a dead letter. The spirit of intolerance and of Jew-hatred which was taught in the schools, and was preached in the pulpit by the Dominicans, became infused into the very blood of men, and the noblest natures were not able to escape contamination. Of what advantage was it to the Jews that they supplied comparatively the largest number of students of science, which they first rendered accessible to Christians, either by means of translations and expositions of didactic writings in foreign languages, or through their own activity and discoveries, especially in medicine? They received no benefit from providing both the merchant world with wares, and the book market with works of genius, for the Christians would acknowledge no thanks to them for their labour, or repaid them by splitting their skulls.

As an eloquent proof of the behaviour of the Middle Ages with regard to the Jews, the conduct of the greatest and most cultured German Emperor towards them may be instanced. Frederick II., the last of the Hohenstaufen line of emperors, was the most genial and unprejudiced monarch of the first half of the thirteenth century. More a Sicilian than a German, he had a liking for the sciences, and supported men of genius with princely liberality. He took an interest in having writings on philosophy and astronomy translated from the Arabic, and for this purpose, he employed many skilful Jews. The Emperor carried on a correspondence with a young Jewish scholar, Jehuda ben Solomon Cohen Ibn Matka, of Toledo (born about 1215, and began to write 1247). His learning produced such an impression on the Emperor

Frederick that he sent him a number of scientific questions, and expressed his pleasure at the answers returned to them: the Emperor then probably induced him to come to Italy (Tuscany). Jehuda Ibn Matka possessed the right of free entry to the Imperial Court.

The Emperor also invited another Jewish sage, Jacob Anatoli (Anatolio), to leave Provence and take up his residence in Naples. He granted the scholar an annual salary, so that he should be at leisure to apply himself to the interpretation of Arabic works of a scientific character. This man, whose full name was Jacob ben Abba-Mari ben Simon, or Samson (flourished about 1200—1250), was the son-in-law of the voluminous translator but sterile author, Samuel Ibn Tibbon, who was greeted with praise by the Maimunists, but with execrations by the strict Talmudists. Anatoli was considered by him in the relation of a son to a father, and in a manner continued his work of translation. Like Ibn Tibbon he did not possess any creative genius, but was so to speak, a handicraftsman in philosophy, who translated Hebrew writings on this subject from the Arabic. He had undergone a special training for this work with his father-in-law and his Christian friend, Michael Scotus. He had so exalted a reverence for Maimuni that he placed him in the rank of the prophets, and was naturally full of wrath against those who termed him a heretic. "These wicked bigots," he remarked, "would have also condemned David and Asaph had they lived in these times." By the aid of the usual philosophical catchwords he interpreted the Holy Writ in the spirit of Maimuni. He also tried to refer the miracles as far as possible to natural causes, and was in short one of that set of men who deprived Judaism of much of its mystical character. Following this method, he delivered public discourses on Sabbaths and Fes-

tivals which he collected in one volume (Malméd), and in spite of its mediocrity, it became the cherished book of the orthodox Provençal congregations. Frederick II. entrusted him with the task of translating the writings of Aristotle, together with the commentaries of the Arabic philosopher, Averroes (Ibn Roschd), which latter had hitherto been unknown to Christians. A Christian doctor, probably Michael Scotus, the Court Astrologer of the Emperor, translated these works into Latin, perhaps under the guidance of Anatoli.

From all this, it might be expected that the Emperor Frederick would have entertained a favourable feeling towards the Jews. Moreover, if only a portion of the accusations which his contemporaries levelled against his orthodoxy be true, it would seem that he was by no means convinced of the truths of Christianity. Pope Gregory IX., his especial foe, rejected him altogether: for the Emperor had declared in public that the world had been deluded by three impostors, Moses, Jesus and Mahomet, of whom two died famous, but the third had ended his days on the Cross. He could therefore certainly not have taken deep offence against the unbelief of the Jews; yet in spite of all this, the Emperor Frederick was no whit less an enemy of the Jews than his opponent, the bigoted Louis the Saint, of France. A bitter enemy to Papacy, which hindered his undertakings in every possible way, he nevertheless published throughout his territories the canonical decree which excluded all Jews from public offices, with the exception of a certain Jewish clerk to the mint at Messina. In his capital, Palermo, he manifested towards the Jews in the Ghetto a spirit of intolerance which far outstripped that of the Pope at that time. In Austria the Jews were permitted to fill public offices, under the rule of the Dukes of Battenberg. The Archduke Frederick I. (the Valiant), recognised the worth of

the Jews as promoters of wealth, entrusted the care of his finances to Jewish hands, and granted to them titles of honour. Two brothers, Leblin and Nekelo, were officially styled Chief Overseers of the Mines to the Duke of Austria. Frederick I. of Austria also (in 1244) granted a royal statute to the Jews of his domain, which appears to be dictated by a love of justice and humanity, and which became an example for other similarly disposed potentates who desired to protect their Jewish subjects from injury and violence. This statute, which consisted of thirty clauses, aimed especially at affording protection to the Jewish inhabitants of Austria against murder and assault. If a Christian slew a Jew he suffered the extreme penalty of the law; if he wounded him he was compelled to pay a heavy fine, or lose his hand. If the murderer of a Jew could not be convicted by means of direct proof of the commission of the crime, but suspicious circumstantial evidence fixed the deed on him, then the relatives or friends of the Jew could appoint a man to meet the accused in a duel. A Christian who laid his hand upon a Jewess was sentenced to the loss of that member. Grave charges involving the persons or property of Jews were not to be determined by the evidence of a Christian unless confirmed by a Jewish witness as to the fact of the misdemeanour. A Christian who kidnapped a Jewish child for the purpose of compulsory baptism was to be punished as a thief. The statute of Frederick the Valiant also allowed the Jews to exercise their own jurisdiction, so that the lords of the country could have no power over them. The synagogues and cemeteries of the Jews were also to be respected by Christians, and the latter were liable to heavy punishment for any outrage upon them. The statute further guaranteed to all Jews the privilege of free passage and trading throughout the country, and the right of making money

loans in return for pledges. The rates of interest were limited, but were still permitted to be sufficiently high. The enactments relating to the right of accepting pledges which had been granted to members of the Jewish religion were strictly regulated as an object of vital importance for both the Jews and the Duke. This law, moreover, shielded them against paying extortionate sums to the Christians for the conveyance of Jewish corpses from place to place. The Archduke Frederick remarked, concerning this matter, that he conceded these privileges to the Jews, in order that "they also should participate in his grace and good wishes." This statute also proved beneficial to the Jews of other lands, for within twenty years it was introduced into Hungary, Bohemia, Greater Poland, Meissen, and Thuringia, and later on into Silesia.

A duke of inferior rank thus set the example of giving the Jews the power of protecting themselves by means of fixed laws against arbitrary decisions. The powerful Emperor Frederick II. thereupon censured Frederick the Valiant for his friendly attitude towards the Jews, and he, who himself had been expelled from the Church, published an edict that the Jews should be rigorously excluded from all public offices to prevent the race, condemned to perpetual slavery, from oppressing the Christians through occupying official posts. With particular satisfaction he pronounced the sentence that the Jews, wherever they were located, were the serfs of the Imperial Chamber. He adhered so strictly to the canonical decrees of the Lateran Council against them, that he was even more strict than the kings of Spain in giving effect to the law which compelled the Jews under his rule to wear a distinguishing badge, and also distressed them by imposing heavy taxes. It is true that he permitted those who had come to Sicily from Africa (whence they had fled before the

fanatical fury of the Almohades), to take up their residence under his sway. But whilst he remitted taxes from other colonists for ten years, he burdened the Jewish immigrants with heavy imposts, and restricted their activity to agricultural pursuits. He also promised his serfs especial protection, but nevertheless he treated them as a despised race of human beings. The three powers of Christianity, the Princes, the Church, and the People, thus combined together in order to utterly destroy the feeblest of nations.

When Pope Gregory IX. once again gave orders for a Crusade to be preached, the assembled holy warriors made an attack upon the Jewish communities in Anjou, Poitou, in the cities of Bordeaux, Angouleme, and elsewhere, in order to compel them to accept baptism. But as the Jews remained steadfast to their faith, the Crusaders acted with unprecedented cruelty towards them, and trampled down many of them beneath the hoofs of their horses. They spared neither children nor pregnant women, and left the corpses lying unburied a prey to the wild beasts and birds. They destroyed the sacred books, burnt the houses of the Jews, and possessed themselves of their property. On this occasion more than three thousand persons perished (in the summer of 1236), whilst more than five hundred accepted Christianity. Once again did the surviving Jews complain to the Pope on account of this unendurable cruelty. The Pope felt himself obliged to send a letter on this matter to the prelates of the Church in Bordeaux, Angouleme, and other bishoprics, and also to King Louis IX. of France (Sept., 1236), in which he deplored the events that had taken place, and signified that the Church was averse to the utter annihilation of the Jews, and also to their compulsory baptism. What, however, could such occasional letters of admonition avail against the bitter feeling of abhorrence towards the Jews

that had been stirred up by the Church? The formerly noble and well-disposed monarch, Louis IX., was so overpowered by this sense of aversion, that he could not bear to look at a Jew. He encouraged the conversion of the Jews in every way, and permitted the children of converted fathers to be torn away from the bosoms of their mothers, who had adhered to Judaism. The Jews had only one means left wherewith they might appease the rage that was kindled against them, and that was—money. In England they, by its influence, induced King Henry III. to proclaim throughout his territories that no one should offer any injury to a Jew. But this means proved to be a double-edged instrument that turned against the very people it was intended to benefit. In order to raise large sums of money, the Jews were compelled to charge extortionate interest, and even to have recourse to fraud. In this way they incurred the hatred of the populace, and were subjected to further outrages. The repeated complaints as to their usury necessitated the law of Louis IX., which properly limited it, and in many cases remitted a portion of the debts owing to Jews. Nevertheless, when this same king determined to repress usury, and called together a number of barons to decide upon the matter, the latter asserted that the peasants and merchants were unable to dispense with loans from the Jews, and that the Jews were preferable to the Christian money-lenders, because the latter oppressed their Christian debtors with still greater rates of usury.

In the midst of all these troubles, hatreds and persecutions, there was only one spot where the Jew might feel himself quite happy and was able to forget his sufferings. The house of study, where young and old gathered together in order to read the Talmud, was their only place of freedom. Absorbed in deep meditation, those who pored over the Talmud became entirely oblivious of the outer

world with its bitter hate, its malicious laws, and its cruel tortures. Here they were the sons of a king, the majesty of thought cast a halo around their brows, and the delight in a spiritual activity illumined their characters. Their whole happiness consisted in solving some difficult problem in the Talmud, or in throwing light upon some obscure point, or in discovering something new which had escaped the notice of their predecessors. They looked neither for office nor honour in reward for their profound studies, and received no tangible recompense for their nocturnal vigils. They desired only to gratify their intense longing for knowledge, to satisfy their sense of religious duty, and in every way to assure themselves of their heavenly reward. The all-important occupation for all persons was study, and the flower of all scholarship was the Talmud. As soon as a child was able to lisp, with his eyes veiled in order that they should not encounter anything profane, he was led on the morning of Pentecost from his house to the Synagogue or "School." There he was taught the Hebrew alphabet in its regular and also reversed order, and some appropriate verses which were read aloud before him. He was rewarded with a honey-cake and an egg, both having some Scriptural verses inscribed thereon. The day on which the child was first introduced to learning was celebrated by his parents and the whole congregation as a festive occasion. If he proved to be somewhat intelligent, he was allowed to begin the Talmud, after having spent some time over the Bible. To be a student of the Talmud was esteemed a highly honour. Disgrace was the portion of the unlearned (*Am ha-Arez*). A studious youth passed many years in the house of study even till the time of his marriage; and to the end of his life the earning of his livelihood was held to be of secondary importance, and the study of the Talmud as the aim of his

existence. This exhaustive absorption in the Talmud was certainly of a confined nature, though it partook of the ideal. The hand of the enemy had not yet intruded into this inner sanctuary. The temporal authorities did not concern themselves in the matter, the clergy had no power over the domestic affairs of the Jews, and their bans of interdict fell harmless on this point.

This domestic freedom of the Jews was, however, soon to be destroyed, and they were to be driven forth from their intellectual asylum. The impetus to this action was given by a baptised Jew who incited the temporal and spiritual powers against his former co-religionists. A man, named Donin (or Dunin), a Talmudist from La Rochelle, in the North of France, had taken it into his head to cast doubts upon the validity of the Talmud and the oral teaching. For this he was excommunicated by the French Rabbis. Being without support either among Jews or Christians, Donin determined to accept baptism, and assumed the name of Nicholas. Filled with hatred against the Rabbis and the Talmud, the apostate determined to revenge himself on both. He was the instigator of the great auto da fés of the Jews and their writings (probably urged on by the clergy), and he occasioned the bloody persecution in Poitou. His revenge was not, however, altogether satiated. Donin or Nicholas betook himself to Pope Gregory IX., and brought charges against the Talmud, saying that it distorted the words of Holy Writ, and in the Agadic portions of it there were to be found disgraceful representations of God. In spite of this, it was held in higher estimation by the Rabbis than the Bible, although it was filled with abuse against the founder of the Christian religion and the Virgin. Donin demonstrated to the Pope that it was the Talmud which prevented the Jews from accepting Christianity, and that without

it they would certainly have abandoned their state of unbelief. The excess of veneration paid by the students of the Talmud for earlier lawgivers suffered a rude and bitter awakening. Without considering the sage remark of Abtalion, "Ye wise men, be cautious with your words," they in their desire to immortalise every utterance, every familiar conversation, every trivial controversy, and even every joke made by one of the Tanaïm or Amoraïm, had incorporated these in the Talmud, thinking that the outer world would be none the wiser, but the sins of the fathers were visited upon the children. On account of various unguarded statements, the Talmud was dragged before the judgment-bench to answer these charges, and the whole of the Jewish world, which had accepted the Talmud as its guide in life, was made responsible for its contents. This was the first time that they were thus accused, but in the course of the century the charge was repeated more frequently and in a more bitter spirit. The apostate had made extracts from the Talmud, and formulated thirty-five articles, upon which he based his charges. Some of these alleged that the Talmud contained many gross errors and absurdities, and also rank blasphemies against God; in others it was stated that it upheld the practice of infamy and deception against all mankind; others again asserted that the Talmud insulted and blasphemed Jesus, the Virgin, and the Church. Compared with the spiteful attacks which the Evangelists, the Church-Fathers down to Hieronymus and Augustine, and various ecclesiastical scholars had made with the intention of provoking and injuring the Jews, the few passages in the Talmud concerning Jesus appeared to be mere harmless jests; but the Church was waging war against the Synagogue, and was very sensitive to any disrespectful utterance. Among his charges against the Talmud, Nicholas-Donin

had however, distorted the truth. He stated that the Talmudical writings taught it was a meritorious action to kill the best man among the Christians; that a Christian who rested on the Sabbath day or studied the Law was to be punished with death; that it was lawful to deceive a Christian without any scruple; that it was permitted to Jews to break a promise made on oath; and many other lying assertions.

The guilt of the Talmud, which implied that of the Jews, was as good as proved to Pope Gregory, for whom the apostate had drawn up these grounds of accusation, and to whom he had communicated them both by word of mouth and in writing. He immediately dispatched to the heads of the Church in France, England, Castile, Aragon, and Portugal, transcripts of the list of charges tabulated by Nicholas, and commanded them to confiscate all copies of the Talmud—on the morning of the first Saturday in Lent, when the Jews assembled in their synagogues—and to hand them over to the Dominicans and Franciscans. He also wrote to the monarchs of those countries, and called upon them to support the Church with their temporal power. The Pope further admonished the Provençal members of the two orders of monks, who had inquisitorial power over books and doctrines, to submit the contents of the Talmudical writings to an examination; and if their judgment should corroborate the charges of Nicholas-Donin, they were to burn the volumes of the Talmud (9 June, 1239).

Thus a new weapon for the destruction of Judaism was brought into play, and had this Papal decree been rigidly executed, the spiritual life of the Jews, which was intimately bound up with the Talmud, would have been endangered in its most vital part. The Pope granted to Nicholas a special letter to be delivered to William, Bishop of Paris, containing an injunction to assail the

Talmud in grim earnest in France, the chief seat of Talmudical erudition, and the original home of the Tossafists.

As is proved by the manner in which the edict of the Pope was carried into force, the pretended Vicar of God upon earth did not really possess such great influence as was supposed, even when he was at the zenith of his power. Only in such places where personal interests and passions were concerned did the princes thoroughly carry into effect the violent policy of the Pope; otherwise, unless they were particularly bigoted, but little heed was paid to Papal decrees even in the Middle Ages. The command of Gregory to confiscate the Talmud was entirely disregarded in Spain and England, at least there is no record of any hostile measures having been taken in these countries. Only in France, where the priest-ridden and weak-minded Louis IX. only assumed a show of reigning when advanced in years, was the confiscation of the Talmud carried out with severity. The Jews were compelled under penalty of death to surrender their copies (March, 1240). The Talmud was then put on its trial. Four distinguished Rabbis of North France were commanded by the king to hold a public disputation with Nicholas, either to refute the imputations levelled against the Talmud, or to make confession of the abuse against Christianity and the blasphemies against God that it contained. Each of these Rabbis was to be examined separately, and to give replies to the accuser.

The four Rabbis who were summoned to act as advocates on behalf of the Talmud were Yechiel (Vivo) of Paris, Moses of Coucy, who had returned from his embassy to Spain, Jehuda ben David of Melun, and Samuel ben Solomon of Chateau-Thierry. Yechiel, who was more eloquent than his associates, and, besides, had more

frequently entered into theological discussions with antagonists who belonged to the Church, was first called, unaccompanied by his friends. He was not asked to controvert the accusations made against them, but to confess that these were founded on truth. The disputation was held in Latin at the Royal Court (on the 5th of Tamuz—25th June, 1240), in the presence of the bishops of Paris and Senlis, of many Dominicans and of the wise queen-mother Blanche, who for all practical purposes was at the head of affairs. At first Yechiel refused to take part in any argument. He based his objection upon the constitution of the Popes, which had assured independence to the Jews in their domestic concerns. He remarked that the Talmud was their very essence of life, on behalf of which numbers of Jews were prepared to die. The queen, however, allayed his fears by assuring him that their lives were in no danger; she would protect them, and he was only required to answer the questions that would be asked of him. When Nicholas demanded that Rabbi Yechiel should take an oath to answer to the best of his knowledge and ability, as otherwise he might attempt to pervert the truth by subtleties and evasions, the Rabbi refused to do so. He at the same time averred that never throughout the course of his life had he been guilty of falsehood, and that he would never invoke the name of God in vain. Thereupon the queen approved of his objection to swear. The discussion which now took place turned upon these two points, as to whether there were in the Talmud immoral sentiments and offensive passages against the Deity, or whether it contained insulting remarks concerning Jesus. Yechiel disproved charges that were made relative to the alleged blasphemous and immoral expressions. With regard to the second of these accusations, he asserted that there could be no doubt that many odious facts were

related in the Talmud concerning a Jesus, the son of Pantheras; these however had no reference to Jesus of Nazareth, but to one of a similar name who had lived long before him. He made this declaration in full earnest almost as an oath, because tradition and Talmudical chronology had misled him to believe that the Jesus whose name occurred in the Talmud was not identical with the founder of Christianity. Yechiel also contended, among other things, that the Father of the Church, Hieronymus, and other Church Fathers, who were acquainted with the Talmud, had never asserted that it contained sentiments of enmity against the Christian faith. Nicholas was the first one to raise these false imputations, inspired as he was with feelings of malice and revenge against his former co-religionists who had expelled him from their community on account of his heresy.

The examination of Yechiel of Paris lasted two days, during which the Jewish congregations fasted and offered up prayers to God to avert misfortune from their heads. On the third day, the second Rabbi, Judah of Melun, was examined, without having been previously allowed to confer with Yechiel, who was kept in custody. In the main he agreed with the statements of Yechiel, that the defamatory passages in the Talmud concerning Jesus did not refer to the man who was held in such great honour by the Christians, and that the Talmud was indispensable to the religious life of the Jews. The two remaining Rabbis were not required to undergo any further examination. As the result of this three days' discussion (25—27 June, 1240), the commission, which had been appointed to make an inquiry upon the Talmud, condemned it to be burnt, on the ground that Yechiel and Judah of Melun had been compelled to admit the truth of several of the charges. The sentence of condemnation, however, remained unfulfilled. It appears that a prelate,

having great influence with the king, named Archbishop Walter (Guatier) Cornutus of Sens, interceded on behalf of the Jews, and effected that the confiscated volumes were altogether or partly restored to their owners. From a Christian source of information, which was intended to calumniate the Jews, but which only points conclusively to the corruptibility of the Church dignitaries of the time, it is gleaned that this prelate was won over to the side of the Jews by a bribe. The French Jews were filled with great joy at the unexpected issue of this event which was of such vital importance to them, and celebrated the day on which the copies of the Talmud were restored to them as a day of rejoicing. But they had begun to exult too early.

The prelate who had thus raised his voice in favour of the Jews suddenly died; the fanatical monks saw in this a heaven-sent punishment for his befriending the Jews, or persuaded the weak-minded and easily led monarch that it was so. Thereupon he commanded that the volumes of the Talmud and similar writings should be sought for and taken away from their possessors by force. Four-and-twenty cartloads of them were brought together in one spot in Paris and committed to the flames (Friday, Tamuz—June, 1242). Two young men, one a Provençal and the other a German, named respectively Abraham Bedaresi and Meïr of Rothenburg, wrote an elegy upon this event. The French Jews or the French students of the Talmud, who imagined that they could as little exist without the Talmud as without their soul, did not remain passive in quiet endurance of their grief. They turned to Pope Innocent IV., the successor of Gregory IX., and begged that they should be permitted to retain their Talmudical writings, without which they could not fulfil their religious obligations. Their petition was acceded to. The new Pope promulgated a decree that they were not to be

deprived of those writings which contained nothing antagonistic to Christianity (1243), and under this description the Talmud could be included, as the Christian clergy were unable to discriminate between one sort of work and another. The fanatics, however, among whom was the Papal legate, Odo, of Chateauroux, continued to agitate against this edict, till they had induced the Pope to give his sanction to the sentence of condemnation that had been passed upon the Talmud.

The grief of the French Jews on account of these events was heartrending. They felt as if their very hearts had been torn from them. The pious men among them kept the anniversary of the burning of the Talmud as a day of fasting. One good effect, however, sprang from these wholesale methods of destruction, which was that they partially disarmed the opponents of the Maimunists, and caused the fierce passions of the parties engaged in internal conflict to be stilled for the moment. Jonah Gerundi was the sole survivor of the chief antagonists of the Maimunist teaching. When young, he had handed over many copies of the writings of Maimuni to the Dominicans and Franciscans in Paris to be thrown into the flames. As soon as Jonah became aware of the bitter hostility of the monkish orders of the Inquisition against the Talmud, which was so highly revered by him, he very deeply regretted that he had employed them as the instruments of his hate against Maimuni, and beheld in the burning of the Talmud a divine punishment for his having allowed the writings of Maimuni to be consumed by fire. He was so overwhelmed by the sense of his injustice that he publicly confessed his sincere repentance in the Synagogue, and announced his intention of making a pilgrimage to the grave of Maimuni, and there, veiled in mourning, of prostrating himself and imploring the pardon of this great and pious man in

the presence of ten persons. For this purpose he set out on his journey, left Paris, and arrived at Montpellier, where he also made public confession of his remorse for his procedure against Maimuni. This act reconciled the minds of the people. His opponents cast aside all their feelings of rancour against him, and received him as a brother. In his discourses he repeatedly mentioned the name of Maimuni with the respect due to that of a holy man. This conversion possessed so much the greater importance, since Jonah was a Rabbinical authority, and the author of several Talmudical works, which were held in high estimation.

From this time forward the whole history of the Jews alternated between restrictive laws and bloody persecutions, which were repeated from year to year, now at one place now at another, but principally in Germany, where the intolerant Church had transformed the naturally mild-tempered people into tigers. When the Mongols and Tartars, the savage warriors of Jenkis-Khan, made their inroads into Europe, ravaged Russia and Poland, and penetrated as far as the borders of Germany, the Jews were accused of having held out to this enemy of Christianity offers of secret assistance. Instead of directing their charges against the Emperor Frederick II. and the Pope, who, on account of their obstinate feud, looked on quietly whilst the savage conquerors were advancing, the rage of the deluded populace, based upon groundless imputations of guilt, was directed against the Jews of Germany. There were certainly Jewish soldiers among the Mongols, from the independent tribes of Choras-san, or, as the legends relate, the remnant of the Ten Tribes who were shut in by the Caspian Mountains. Had the German Jews any knowledge of their kinsmen among the Mongol hordes? Had they any secret understanding with them? A story was circulated in Germany as follows :—The Jews had

offered to supply to the Mongols poisoned provisions. Under this pretext they had attempted to provide them with weapons of all kinds enclosed in casks. A bold guard at the borders having his suspicions aroused, insisted on having the casks opened, whereupon the plot was revealed. This tale was received with general credulity, and was the cause of much suffering to the German Jews.

As if the representatives of the Church had not yet done sufficient harm to the Jews, they determined to deprive them of their only remaining position of influence in Christian society. The practice of medicine was principally in the hands of Jews; indeed, nearly every prince and noble had his private Jewish physician, who possessed more or less influence over the mind of the one whose body was entrusted to his skill. The clergy, who were seldom gentle as doves, but who were often full of cunning, could not suffer this influence of the Jews over the powerful rulers of the land. The Church Convocation at Beziers paid special attention to this question, and enacted that the Jews should be debarred from practising the medicinal art. Under the presidentship of the Archbishop of Narbonne, this Council, which determined to inflict all kinds of hardships upon the Albigensian heretics, renewed many ancient restrictions. They enacted that Jews should not be allowed to possess Christian servants or nurses, nor should they be admissible to offices of trust. They were not to leave their homes during Passion Week; they should pay to the Church for each family an annual sum of six dinars. Upon their breasts they were bidden to wear a distinctive badge, that of a wheel; they were also forbidden to sell meat in public. To these laws there was added a canonical decree that Christians should not seek the services of Jewish doctors under penalty of excommunication (May, 1246). These restrictive enactments were

repeated by a Council held in the South of France, in which district the Jews had brought the healing art to the point of perfection. The family of the Tibbons, which consisted of grandfather, son, and nephew, had acted as instructors to Christian physicians; and now the fourth member of the family, Moses (who flourished 1250—1285 in Montpellier), the translator of philosophical and medical writings, was commanded to discontinue his art in order to give place to Christian practitioners! Another writer on medicine, and a practical physician, Shem-Tob ben Isaac of Tortosa (born 1206, composed his works about 1261—64), delivered public discourses on the art to Christian audiences in Marseilles, and made them acquainted with the results of the Arabian schools. This physician presents an instructive instance of the Jewish zeal for knowledge. In his youth he occupied himself exclusively with the Talmud; some time later he forsook this study and became a merchant. In this profession he made journeys across the sea, and went as far as the last remaining seat of the former Christian kingdom of Jerusalem, Jean d'Acre (Acco). Here a co-religionist, who was engaged in the study of mathematics, upbraided him for having considered science as subordinate to the earning of his livelihood. Owing to this rebuke, although nearly thirty years of age, Shem-Tob Tortosi changed his plan of life, hastened from Acco to Barcelona, and made study his primary pursuit, and his livelihood a subsidiary one. He learned the art of medicine, and arrived at such a pitch of excellence in it, that he was able to translate the writings of the best Arabian doctors, and to deliver lectures upon the healing art. These and many other Jewish physicians were now, in pursuance of the edict of the Council at Beziers, to be driven forth from the temple to which they alone in all Christendom possessed the key!

Meanwhile, although the Church held the souls of the faithful captive and in a state of mystification, yet their bodies remained rebelliously opposed to it and its decisions. This canonical law could not, therefore, retain its force for long. In his illness even the most bigoted Christian called in the aid of the clever Jewish physician. It happened that Alfonso, Duke of Poitou and Toulouse, the brother of the fanatical king, Louis IX., was afflicted with some disease of the eye. The anti-Jewish Convocations at Beziers and Alby had been held under this prince's patronage. He was perforce obliged to invoke the assistance of a skilful Jewish eye-doctor named Abraham of Aragon. The lord of Lünel was driven to use great efforts, and to seek the good offices of his Jewish courtiers, in order to extract a promise from the wealthy and independent Jewish physician that he would attend to the French prince. In Montpellier, where there existed a famous College of Medicine, Jewish physicians were still for a long time empowered to conduct examinations, to practise, and even to give instruction. ✕

The frequent massacres of the Jews, which for ten years had been taking place in Germany and France, especially on the charge of the murder of Christian children, roused the German and French congregations to apply for protection to Pope Innocent IV., and to prove conclusively to him that like all accusations brought against them, the charge that they employed the blood and hearts of human beings, was a lying invention, concocted solely for the purpose of seeking an occasion for murder and robbery. At this time Innocent lived in partial exile at Lyons, whither he had been forced to retire owing to his dispute with the Emperor Frederick II. He yielded to the entreaty of the Jews either because he deemed it politic considering his strained relations with nearly all the temporal powers, to appear to act justly, or because the Jews

had liberally supplied him with the means of which he was so covetous, to enable him to overcome his bitter opponents. About his greed for money a biting satire was written describing how the goddess Pecunia rules the world, the Church never closes its doors against her, and the Pope willingly receives her in his arms. Innocent IV. despatched a Bull from Lyons (July 5, 1247) to the Church dignitaries of France and Germany, in which now for the first time the repeated reckless and fiendish imputations against the Jews were officially contradicted. "Certain of the clergy, and princes, nobles and great lords of your dioceses have falsely invented certain godless ideas against the Jews, in order that they might unjustly deprive them by force of their property, and appropriate it to themselves; they thus seek pretexts, and fashion baseless charges against them, saying that they distribute among themselves on the Passover portions of the heart of a murdered boy. Christians believe that the Law of the Jews prescribes this to them, whilst in their Law the very reverse is ordained. In fact, owing to their malice, they assign every murder, wherever it chance to occur, to the work of Jews. And on the ground of these and other fabrications they are filled with rage against them, rob them of their possessions without any formal accusation, without confession, and without their having been sentenced in due form. Contrary to the privileges graciously granted to them from the Apostolic Chair, and opposed to God and His justice, they oppress the Jews by starvation, imprisonment, and by other tortures and sufferings; they afflict them with all kinds of punishments, and sometimes even condemn them to death, so that the Jews, although living under Christian princes, are in a yet worse plight than were their ancestors in Egypt under the Pharaohs. They are driven to leave in despair the land in which their fathers have

dwelt since the memory of man. Since it is our pleasure that they should not be distressed, we ordain that ye also behave towards them in a friendly and favourable manner. Where any unjust attacks upon them come under your notice, redress their injuries, and see that ye do not suffer that they be visited in the future by any such or similar tribulations." One would imagine that by so decisive a condemnation of the blood-accusation, that false imputation would have been once for all eradicated. But the Papacy had so impregnated men's hearts with the feeling of hatred against the Jews, that a mild expression of opinion from one or the other of the Popes passed idly away as a breath of wind.

The so-called St. Louis was literally more Papal than the Pope himself. His weak mind lent its ready aid to all the fanatical measures taken against the Jews. When he suddenly set on foot the wild idea of entering upon a new Crusade, he consented to the confiscation of the property of certain Jews in order to obtain money for the campaign. Whilst waging war in Egypt in furtherance of the Crusade, he was taken prisoner (April-May, 1250). He was jeered at by the Mahometans, in that he, the most Christian king, suffered the enemies of Christianity to remain in his kingdom. He thereupon, on his release, promulgated an edict for the banishment of all Jews, with the exception of handicraftsmen, from his territories. In the meantime his prudent mother, the queen Blanche, paid little heed to this reckless command. On her death, however, and the subsequent return of Louis to France (December, 1254), the king proceeded with the expulsion of the Jews in bitter earnest. Their landed property, synagogues and cemeteries, were forfeited to the Crown. What Philip Augustus had done from apparently political motives, Louis, the Saint of the Church, did out of fanaticism. But

on this, as on the former occasion, the period of exile was not long. As before, the edict affected only those Jews who dwelt on the king's own territories; and even then those who lived by the labour of their hands were excepted. A few years later, permission was granted to the exiles to return, and their synagogues and cemeteries were restored to them.

It remains a noteworthy fact that the domestic activity of the French Jews, and the ingenious exposition of the Talmud by the Tossafists, in no way ceased on account of these miseries, but continued undisturbed for some time longer. The Talmud was burnt; the teaching of it was again prohibited by Louis; and still in this very time the pious travelling preacher, Moses of Coucy, composed his great work on the Law. In this he combined, in a clear synoptical manner, the elements of the Talmud together with the religious ordinances of the Bible, proceeding on the basis of the Code of Maimuni. Another famous Talmudist, Samuel ben Solomon Sir Morel, of Falaise, prepared a new collection of Tossafot, just at the time when the Talmud was proscribed (1252-59); he possessed no copy of the Talmud to work from, because the officers of the Dominicans had deprived him of it, and he was compelled to rely upon his memory. Moreover, Yechiel of Paris, had three hundred students of the Talmud in his academy, to whom he delivered discourses, probably from memory. But this activity could not continue very long; there were too many obstacles to be encountered. The French congregations had become impoverished by the frequent demands for money and the confiscation of their property. Whilst all other countries, except France, were expending money for the support of the Jews in Asia, Yechiel was compelled to send a messenger to Palestine and the neighbouring lands to procure

supplies for the maintenance of his academy. Yechiel also felt himself obliged to leave his native land and to journey towards Palestine (to Jean d'Acre). He was one of the last representatives of the French Tossafist School, which had developed so much ingenuity and critical acumen, but now gradually declined and approached its fall. The Church succeeded in altogether destroying the Talmudical spirit which existed and had its chief home in France. The last followers of the school of Tossafists in France were only compilers who endeavoured to bring the results of the labours of past scholars into proper form and order. Prompted by the unpropitious state of affairs, which removed all chances for the study of the Talmud, when even the Rabbis were at a loss for giving correct decisions, Isaac ben Joseph, of Corbeil, the pupil and son-in-law of Yechiel of Paris, wrote a concise manual of such religious duties as were of practical importance to the Jews in their dispersion (*Semak*). He strove to render his book as popular and pleasing as possible, for he could not otherwise depend upon its being easily understood by the bulk of the people, and he sent a letter to the congregations of France and Germany asking them to take the trouble of making copies of his work, and of spreading the knowledge of it. The Tossafist method of study perished before the fanaticism of the mendicant friars and the bigotry of King Louis IX.

In England, throughout the long reign of King Henry III. (1216—1272), the condition of the Jews grew worse and worse. Henry, indeed, was not a tyrant like his father, John Lackland, and was at first kindly disposed towards the Jews. During his minority, whilst the Regent held the reins of office, the Jews were treated with great indulgence. Commands were given to the sheriffs to protect them against the violence of the mob; and

distinct and impressive intimation was given to the clergy that they had no power over the Jews. Henry, or the Regent, permitted foreign Jews to land and settle in any part of England without paying any special tax for the privilege; and he forbade the native Jews, not perhaps from any particularly tender feeling towards them, to quit the country. Henry, as his father had done, appointed a Chief Rabbi over all the Jewish congregations (*presbyter Judæorum*). The first man to hold this office was Joceus (*José?*); Aaron of York succeeded him, and the last to hold the post was Elias of London. This appointment was for life. The English Chief Rabbi possessed very great authority over the members of his community. He was at the same time royal overseer (*justitarius*) of the revenues of the Crown which were obtained from the Jews. It was his duty, together with certain Jewish and Christian colleagues, to keep a register of the property of the English Jews in the Rolls (*rotuli*); to see also to the payment of the Jew-tax into the treasury (called the Exchequer of the Jews); and also to deliver up to the royal exchequer the property of men who had died without heirs, this property escheating to the Crown. If the Chief Rabbi did not wish to occupy himself in monetary matters, he had to nominate a substitute, who was invested with full powers. Finally, he was endowed with the authority to excommunicate members of his community who refused to obey his decrees, or who would not contribute towards the burdens of the congregation. Henry III. at first energetically restrained the intolerance of the Church. On one occasion, when the Archbishop of Canterbury, in order to prevent intercourse between Christians and Jews, issued a decree prohibiting all Christians, on fear of ecclesiastical censure, from selling any kinds of food to Jews, the king countermanded the interdict. Whilst the French Jews were being robbed and massacred

by the crowds of Crusaders, Henry exerted himself to prevent the spreading of this spirit of fanaticism over his domains.

But this considerate treatment of the Jews did not last long. Henry III. was of a reckless, thoughtless nature, and very extravagant. He lent a ready ear to all that his friends advised. He was especially guided by the Legates and Purse-bearers of the Pope, who had been sent to obtain sway over this rich land, and who, like a long-enduring epidemic, caused much injury to England, and stirred up revolts and civil war. On the one hand he was in great need of a very large sum of money, and on the other the influence of the Church was continually growing stronger. In order to replenish his almost empty coffers, Henry levied a capitation tax upon the Jews, even upon newly-born infants. A portion of every debt that had been contracted between Jews and Christians was to be paid into the royal treasury. The bonds for debts owing to Jews were therefore registered and examined with suspicious care, lest an attempt be made to defraud his majesty of any money. They had to be attested by several witnesses, and a copy of them deposited in the City Archives. The ordinary Jew-taxes, however, did not long satisfy the king, who was involved in debt, and very lavish in his expenditure. Enormous sums were extracted from the congregations, now under one pretext and now under another. The clergy anxiously watched for their opportunity. Soon after, the Jews were accused of causing their baptised brethren to return to the fold, and of circumcising Christian boys. Upon such charges a portion or even the whole of the congregations were cast into prison, and only released on payment of a heavy ransom. All this, however, presents no novel features. An entirely new and original plan was started when the king summoned a Jewish Parliament. He issued writs to all the English

communities, commanding the larger ones to return six representatives from among their distinguished men, and the smaller, two, who were to assemble before the king, in Worcester, on the Sunday before Lent. The Jewish Parliament in Worcester numbered over one hundred members. The king in his message to them stated that they were required to take counsel together for their own and his majesty's welfare. But the Jews hardly allowed themselves to be lulled into the deceptive belief that their liberty would be conceded to them. Henry only took the trouble of assembling his ordinary Parliament when he was in urgent necessity of supplies. Similarly, he called together his Jewish Parliament, in order that they should collect large sums of money for him, and the Jews dared not make any objections. Finally, the Parliament elected trustworthy men to assess the money for each congregation, and to see to its payment. If the apportioned sums of money were not forthcoming, the collectors were made answerable, on penalty of imprisonment for themselves, their wives, and their families. When at length Henry had squeezed the Jews sufficiently dry, and a feeling of shame prevented him from demanding any more money from them, he pledged them, on certain conditions, to his brother Richard, who was even less moved by feelings of consideration.

The Church now began its work with canonical extortions and cruelties. The clergy prevailed on the king, who was their plaything, to prohibit the Jews from erecting any new House of Prayer; they were not to utter their prayers aloud in their synagogues, and especially they were to wear the conspicuous Jew-badge on their garments. Many other enactments were passed to a similar effect. The life of the Jews became so intolerable to them by reason of this double tyranny of Church and State, that their Chief Rabbi Elias, together with a few col-

leagues, declared on two occasions to the king, in the name of the congregations, that as they could not pay the taxes that were continually being demanded from them, they must ask leave to quit the country. However sorry they might be to depart from their native land, and to forsake house and home, yet they preferred it to the miserable condition in which they now were. But it was of no avail. The Jews were obliged to remain in England against their will; they were forced to surrender their last farthing, and to resort to usury in order to re-fill the squeezed-out sponge. An account which is still extant gives some idea of the exactions from the Jews made by Henry III. They were required to collect within seven years the sum of £422,000 sterling. A single Jew, Aaron of York, was compelled to pay to the king, in seven years, the sum of 30,000 marks of silver, besides 200 of gold paid to the queen. As the Chief Rabbi Elias did not extort sufficient in the interest of the king, Henry deposed him, and granted to the Jews the privilege, on payment of a certain sum, of electing their own spiritual leaders.

Meanwhile, in England also, the usual charge of child-murder was made against the Jews. The Dominicans, with their poisonous eloquence, zealously called for their punishment. Several of them were thrown into prison; but they were freed by the Franciscans. Matthew Paris, the malicious chronicler of the period, remarks, concerning the affair, "It was generally believed by the angry populace that the Minorites had permitted themselves to be bribed for their friendship for the Jews." This statement, indeed, does not go to prove the guilt of the Jews in the charge of child murder, but that the Franciscans had for once consented to perform a just action. The constant instigations of the fanatical Dominicans against the Jews had roused the people to such a pitch of hatred against

this race, that just at the time when the Commons were admitted by law to act as the third power in the State, when they rose against the despotic rule of the monarch, they made an attack upon the Jews in London, pillaged their treasures, and murdered 1,500 of them (Easter week, 1264). The surviving Jews fled for safety to the Tower, where the king granted his protection to them; their houses, however, fell into the hands of the plundering barons. The Jews became so impoverished by these assaults that they were not able to pay the ordinary taxes, and Henry was obliged to remit payment for the previous three years, in order to avoid reducing them to a state of total destitution (1268). Both the king and the Parliament forbade them from taking loans, and especially from purchasing houses from Christian owners (1270).

Superficially contrasted and compared with the condition of their brethren in England, France and Germany, the Jews in Spain at this time appeared to be living in a Paradise. In Castile, Alfonso X. (1252—84), who was already called the Wise by his contemporaries, was king. He in reality had a strong affection for science, and encouraged its pursuit. He emulated the fame of his Mahometan predecessors, Abderrahman III. and Alhakem. Although his father, Ferdinand the Holy—which title is always synonymous with the Intolerant—was not particularly gracious towards the Jews, yet the son, who did not follow his example, appeared desirous of pursuing another course of action. In the war against Seville, which he conducted whilst only Heir Apparent, there were many Jewish soldiers in his army. When this city had been captured, and the district was being partitioned out among the warriors, the Infante Alfonso looked well to the interests of his Jewish allies. He allotted to them certain lands, where they might form a village exclusively Jewish, which should

be their sole property (*Aldea de los Judios*). He conceded three mosques, which they turned into synagogues, to the Jews of Seville. The latter had probably helped towards the capture of the city, as they had been in a very wretched condition beneath the rule of the Almohades, being compelled to live disguised as Mahometans. A large portion of the town, which was separated from the rest of the city by a wall, belonged to them (under the name of *Parternilla de los Judios*). Out of gratitude towards the victor, the congregation of Seville presented him with a valuable artistically wrought key, with a Hebrew and Spanish inscription, which ran as follows:—"The King of kings opens, the king of the land will enter." When Alfonso ascended the throne he entrusted many important official positions to the Jews. Don Meir de Malea, who was a cultured man, and a student of the Talmud, was treasurer to this monarch, and bore the title of *Almoxarif*. He appears to have performed his functions in this office in so excellent a manner that his son, Don Zag (Isaac) succeeded him in the position. It remained a regular custom in Castile for a long space of time to select Jews as Chancellors of the Exchequer, not alone because they were better informed on financial matters than the Spanish *hidalgos*, but because they acted in a more trustworthy and skilful manner. Many other Jews also had the entry to the Court of Alfonso. He employed a Jewish physician, Don Judah ben Moses Cohen, who at the same time was his astronomer and astrologer. The king, who was himself engaged in the study of astrology and alchemy to a great extent, caused astronomical works, and a book upon the qualities of certain stones, to be translated by learned Jews from Arabic into Castilian. At this period, as in earlier times, there were very few Christian scholars acquainted with Arabic, although

they were surrounded by Arabs, and the Jews here as in most places acted as the means of communication. Churchmen, who had managed not to forget their Latin, then translated the Castilian version made by the Jews into the language of the Church. The king was accustomed to call a minister in the Synagogue of Toledo "his Sage." This man was Don Zag (Isaac) Ibn Said (Sid), one of the most distinguished astronomers of his age. Alfonso commissioned this minister, Don Zag, to draw up astronomical tables, which work renders the name of this sovereign more famous than his warlike deeds and political wisdom. Even down to the recent discoveries in astronomy men engaged in this study made use of the "Tables of Alfonso," which more appropriately should be termed the tables of Zag or of Said. There was also a third Jewish man of science at the Court of Alfonso, Samuel Halevi, whose name is connected with an ingenious water-clock, which he invented and fashioned at the order of the king. The representatives of the Church were naturally very much incensed by the Jews holding these important positions at Court, and the Pope Nicholas III. thereupon addressed the king in a letter which contained a long list of sins having their origin in selfishness and presumption, and pointed out that many evils arose because Jews were preferred to Christians.

Meanwhile, although Alfonso admitted many cultured and able Jews to the Court, and employed their talents, yet the condition of the Jews of Castile under his rule was by no means so favourable as one might expect at first sight. Alfonso was not altogether free from the prejudices of his time. The spirit of hatred of the Jews, which had been stirred up by Innocent III., had taken its hold upon him, just as upon the Emperor Frederick II., whose place a faction in Germany

had elected him to fill. Alfonso also deserved the honourable title of "the Wise" only in a limited sense, seeing that he acted very unwisely in political matters, and in his relations with the Church was by no means as enlightened as Frederick II. Out of love to the Church, or also because of his bigoted mind, he placed many restrictions in the way of the Jews by different enactments, and reduced them to a degraded condition. It is not quite certain whether the West Gothic collection of laws (called *Forum Judicum*, *fuero juzgo*) was translated into Castilian by Alfonso or his father. From this collection the Spaniards derived an indelible spirit of hatred against the Jews. Whether Alfonso is responsible for this or not, it is nevertheless well ascertained that he aimed at reducing the Jews to a miserable state by a series of ordinances issued by himself.

He established for all the peoples of his kingdom a detailed code of laws, divided into seven groups, and written in Castilian (1257—66). In this work there are many references to the Jews, in fact a whole section of this legislation treats solely of them. It is there stated: "Although the Jews deny Christ, they are still suffered in all Christian countries, so that they should remind everybody that they belong to that race which crucified Jesus. Since they are permitted to exist, they must keep themselves quiet and unobtrusive, must not openly preach the doctrines of Judaism, nor attempt to make any converts to their religion." The law of Alfonso attached the penalty of death to the conversion of a Christian to Judaism. It further asserts, that in ancient times the Jewish nation were held in respect and called the people of God, but owing to their wickedness against Jesus, they had forfeited this prerogative, and no Jew was ever to obtain any distinction or fill any public office in Spain. Alfonso included in his code of laws every possible restriction and hindrance

which the hostile fanaticism of man had ever devised against the Jews. They were prohibited from building any new synagogues, from having Christian servants, and still less from mingling with Christians. Jews and Jewesses were to wear a peculiar mark upon their head-dresses, and any person who was seen without this mark was condemned to pay a fine in pieces of gold, or if he were poor, to receive ten stripes with the scourge. Jews and Christians were not to take their meals together or bathe in company. Alfonso also brought into force the restriction that Jews should not appear in the public streets on Good Friday. The wise Alfonso gave credence to the lying fable that the Jews every year on Good Friday crucified a Christian child, and therefore framed a law that whoever should be found guilty of this crime, or should crucify a wax figure on this day, should be put to death. In vain had Pope Innocent IV. admitted the falsehood of this accusation, and proved the innocence of the Jews. In places where the voice of the Pope was heard to speak in a favourable manner of the Jews, his infallibility was discredited, even by a moderately cultured monarch who held intercourse with Jews. One could hardly believe that the king, who kept a private Jewish physician, should have promulgated a law to the effect that no Christian should take any medicine that had been prepared by the hand of a Jew. There were yet many clauses in the code of Alfonso which contained concessions to the Jews, as for instance that their synagogues were not to be profaned or dishonoured, that they themselves were not to be dragged along to undergo forced baptism, were not to be summoned before a Court of Justice on their festivals, and that they were only to take one oath upon the Torah without any further degrading ceremony, as was done sometimes in Germany.

The laws of Alfonso with regard to the Jews had indeed no practical importance for the time being; his code only obtained the force of actual law at a much later date. Alfonso himself transgressed the very laws concerning the Jews which he had laid down, in that he permitted Jews to hold offices of trust. Nevertheless, his collection of laws exercised a most prejudicial effect upon the Jews of Spain, inasmuch as they were of a similar pattern to the canonical measures taken by the Church against them, and contributed towards transforming their paradise into a veritable hell. The Alfonsian laws are in force at the present day in Spanish America, whilst his astronomical tables have been forgotten.

The Jews in the kingdom of Aragon were being treated in a still worse manner. Two influences were here at work, with the purpose of making their condition a most humiliating one. The king Jayme (Jacob I.), who reigned for a long time, had possessions in the South of France, and often came into connection with the bigoted St. Louis, and his councillors. From these men he borrowed the theory of the proper treatment of the Jews. He also looked upon them as the chattels of the sovereign, together with all their possessions — almost as his private serfs. No Jew was allowed to place himself under the protecting wing of a nobleman. This idea had also its good side, since it withdrew the Jews from the jurisdiction of the Church. A law was made by Jayme which expressly stated that the Jews were not to be treated either as prisoners or slaves. They were thus only exposed to the arbitrary action of the reigning sovereign, which was not limited by any law or custom. The second opposing influence emanated from the Church and its blind zealots. The general of the Dominicans was Raymond of Penjaforte, the collector of the Papal Decretals, whose whole soul was bent upon elevat-

ing the power of the Papacy and of the infallible Church above that of the State, and who was the predecessor of Torquemada. This gloomy and evil-minded monk was the confessor of King Jayme. The King of Aragon had loved much and sinned greatly, and was thus in great need of his father-confessor, and dependent on him; and if he did not always obey his will, he made concessions to him in his treatment of Jews and Mahometans. The main purpose of Penjaforte's exertions was to convert Jews and Mahometans. In the higher schools, conducted by the Dominicans, Penjaforte had also Hebrew and Arabic taught, so that the preaching friars should have the means of undertaking active conversion, owing to their knowledge of these languages.

A young man of this order, named Pablo Christiani, a baptised Jew, who was similarly minded to Nicholas-Donin, was the first missionary preacher for the conversion of the Jews. He journeyed about in the South of France and in other places, invited the Jews to enter into discussion with him, and sought to demonstrate to them that the Messianic character and Divinity of Jesus was confirmed in the Bible and Talmud. As his mission was crowned with little or absolutely no success, De Penjaforte resolved on arranging a public disputation on religion at the royal Court, between Pablo Christiani and the most famous Rabbi in Spain, Moses Nachmani, with regard to the relative merits of Judaism and Christianity. If the Rabbi should be converted, Penjaforte hoped to effect without any difficulty the wholesale acknowledgment by the Jewish communities of the truths of the Christian faith. Nachmani received a letter of invitation from King Jayme to come to Barcelona and enter upon a solemn discussion (1263).

Nachmani made his appearance, and, contrary to his own desire, was obliged to announce himself

prepared for the disputation. He conducted it with dignity, and represented the religion of his fathers before a Christian king in as honourable a manner as Philo of Alexandria had done twelve hundred years before, in the presence of a heathen emperor. At the outset Nachmani observed to Jayme and his confessor Penjaforte that he was only ready to take part in this contest on the condition that complete freedom of speech was granted to him so as to enable him to maintain his position before his opponent. The king consented to this stipulation. When Penjaforte thereupon remarked that he must not avail himself of this liberty of speech to revile and blaspheme Christianity, he replied, with dignity, that he was also aware of the rules of common courtesy. The discussion between Nachmani and Pablo Christiani, if compared with that between Yechiel and Nicholas-Donin, clearly reveals the important advantage which the Spanish Jews had over their brethren of North France. The Rabbi of Paris and the Dominican Donin fought like two fierce pugilists, who assailed each other with heavy blows of the fist, accompanied by words of abuse: the Rabbi of Gerona and the Dominican Pablo, on the other hand, met like two well-cultured noblemen, who dealt their blows with an air of politeness, and with due observance of the etiquette of refined society.

This disputation at Barcelona lasted for four days (beginning on the 20th July). It took place in the palace of the king, and in the presence of the whole Court and of many distinguished ecclesiastics, knights and citizens. Many Jews were also most probably among the audience. Nachmani at the very beginning clearly marked out the exact extent of the ground to be discussed. The points of difference between Judaism and Christianity were so numerous, he remarked, that it was advisable only to pay attention to and

examine the most essential among them. The plan of discussion which he suggested was, first, whether the Messiah had already appeared or not; next, whether the Messiah was to be considered, according to the prophecies of the Bible, as God, or as a man born of human parents; and finally whether the Jews or the Christians were in possession of the true faith. The king and all those interested in the matter expressed their approval of this proposed plan. It is a peculiar fact worthy of notice that whilst Nicholas-Donin accused the Talmud on the ground that it contained scurrilous attacks upon Jesus and the Christians, Pablo Christiani based his argument on the opposite contention that the Talmud recognised Jesus as the Messiah. This statement it was, of course, easy for Nachmani to refute. Pablo's chief proof rested upon Agadic passages, but Nachmani had at starting carefully guarded himself against this method of attack, in that he emphatically asserted that he did not believe in these and other Agadic stories. The Dominican now declared to the Rabbi that such an interpretation as he suggested was heresy, and he desired to be instructed how to distinguish clearly between what was orthodox in Judaism and what was infidelity. His Jewish antagonist would not however allow himself to be led astray by such remarks, and justified his assertion by saying, that it behoved a Jew to believe in the truth of the Bible and in the exposition of the Talmud in as far as it concerned the performance of his religious duties; but, on the other hand, he was perfectly at liberty to reject or accept the Agadic interpretations, which were to be regarded only in the light of sermons (*sermones*), according as it appeared to his mind to be conformable or opposed to his ideas. Nachmani also made another deeply incisive remark. He said "that he had more regard for the Christian monarch than for the Messiah." This

statement he justified in the following manner:—It was an act of greater merit for himself as for all Jews, if they kept the precepts of their religion whilst under a Christian ruler, in exile and whilst suffering humiliation and abusive ill-usage, than if they carried it out when dwelling in prosperity and freedom beneath the rule of a powerful Jewish king. The Messiah was, from this point of view, to be regarded as a king of flesh and blood. Nachmani did not neglect to bring forward an important objection to the Messiahship of Jesus, which had already been employed by ancient polemical writers. All the prophets had foretold, that at the time of the Messiah a more elevated standard of morality should prevail among mankind, and especially that all war and bloodshed should cease. But since the date of the appearance of Jesus, the world had really become filled with violence and injustice. The Christians were considered to be the most warlike among the nations, that is to say, the people that shed most blood. Then turning to the king, Nachmani said, “It behoves thee, and thy knights, O King, to put an end to all thy war-making, as is necessary for the beginning of the Messianic era.”

When Nachmani had already been debating upon the doctrines of Christianity with a spirit of candour combined with dignity, for three days, the Jews of Barcelona entreated him to break off the disputation, as they feared the persecution of the Dominicans. Many knights and clergymen also warned him against being carried too far by his frankness. The Christian inhabitants of Barcelona interested themselves in behalf of the Jews, and desired to avoid all causes for provocation. Nachmani communicated the state of affairs to the king, who wished the disputation to continue. The contest of intellect was therefore resumed. Nachmani finally proved victorious, as Pablo was

no match for his well-directed arguments. At the end of the discussion, the king observed to Nachmani at a private audience, that he had never heard so unjust a matter defended so skilfully. The Dominicans, however, sought to spread the report that Pablo Christiani had contrived to outwit his opponent and drive him into a corner so cleverly that the latter, overwhelmed with shame, had secretly fled. So far from running away, Nachmani remained in Barcelona for another eight days, as a rumour had got abroad that his majesty and the Dominicans intended to visit the synagogue on the following Saturday. They did really present themselves in the synagogue, and Penjaforte again resumed the disputation in it. He illustrated his explanation of the Trinity by the wine, which possesses the qualities of colour, taste, and smell, and is yet a unity. It was an easy task for Nachmani to offer a complete reply to these and similar analogies, and he at last drove the confessor of the king to acknowledge this insidious truth, that the idea of the Trinity was such a profound mystery that even the angels were unable to comprehend it. Thereupon Nachmani remarked, "If this is really the case, then, no reproach ought to be made to men if they cannot surpass the angels in wisdom." Before his departure, Nachmani was again admitted to an audience with the king, and dismissed with a friendly farewell. He received from him a gift, as a mark of respect, of three hundred maravedis.

The consequences of this disputation at Barcelona were, however, by no means harmless. De Penjaforte was resolved upon compassing the conversion of the Jews, and permitted nothing to bend him from his fixed determination. He obtained from King Jayme a letter of protection for this purpose to enable his protégé Pablo Christiani to go on long missionary travels, whereby the Jews

were exposed to the arbitrary action of the Jewish Dominican friar. What had not succeeded in Barcelona, with an antagonist like Nachmani, might perhaps be successful in some other places with less skilful opponents. Directions were issued to the congregations in Aragon, and in the adjoining districts of Southern France, to enter into discussion, under penalties, with Pablo Christiani at his invitation. The Jews were compelled to listen to him quietly, either in their synagogues or wherever they chanced to be, to answer his questions meekly, and to hand over to him all such books as he required for his demonstrations. They were also to defray the expenses of his mission. The despair of the Jews at such demands may well be imagined. Whether victorious or defeated, they were still subject to torments and extortion.

In spite of the protection granted to him by the king, Pablo Christiani met with but little success among his former co-religionists. He, thereupon, followed in the footsteps of Nicholas-Donin, and denounced the Talmud, asserting that it contained passages of hostile import directed against Jesus and Mary. He applied to Pope Clement IV., and repeated to him the charges against the Talmud. The Pope, at his request, therefore issued a Bull (in 1264) to the Bishop of Tarragona, commanding him to confiscate copies of the Talmud, and to submit them to the examination of the Dominicans and Franciscans; if found to be blasphemous they were to be burnt. Pablo Christiani, the apostate, in person brought this Bull to Spain. Thereupon King Jayme published an edict (1264) that the Talmud should be examined, and the passages containing abuse and slander should be struck out. The duty of acting as censors was entrusted to the Bishop of Barcelona, De Penjaforte, and to three other Dominicans. Pablo Christiani was also connected therewith. This commission marked the

passages in the Talmud which were to be obliterated, and it thus formed the first Censorship undertaken by the Dominicans against the Talmud in Spain. The censorship was on the whole less destructive in Aragon than in France, where the whole Talmud was condemned to the flames. The reason of this comparative mildness was explained by a member himself of the Order of the learned Dominicans, named Raymond Martin, who afterwards wrote two anti-Jewish works. He stated that as several passages in the Talmud bore witness to the truth of Christianity, and were certainly traditions derived from Moses, the Talmud should therefore not be utterly destroyed.

The hurtful effects of the disputation of Nachmani had not yet been altogether exhausted. They even affected the man himself, who represented, as it were, the centre of Spanish Judaism in the post-Maimunic age. Nachmani found himself obliged to publish, for his co-religionists, a true and accurate report of the proceedings at Barcelona, in order to oppose the missionary machinations of Pablo Christiani, and to answer the unnatural vain-glory of Dominicans over the victory, which they declared that they had gained at the disputation held at the Court.

He did not act in a secret manner, but gave a copy of his pamphlet to the Bishop of Gerona, and, as the latter raised no objection, copies of the account of this disputation were despatched to various countries where Jews dwelt (about 1264). As might be expected, Nachmani by this proceeding drew down upon himself the hatred of the Dominicans yet more fiercely. Pablo Christiani, into whose hands this report of the disputation came, and who understood Hebrew, selected from it passages that contained gross blasphemies against the Christian religion, and made a notification of them to his superior, the fanatical general of the Dominicans,

De Penjaforte. The latter then, in conjunction with a brother friar, instituted a capital charge, and lodged a formal complaint before the king against the author and his work. Don Jayme was obliged to assent to the charge; but he did not entrust the trial into the hands of a court composed of Dominicans, but called together an extraordinary commission, and invited Nachmani (or as he was called by the Christians, Bonastruc de Porta) to defend himself, and ordered that the proceedings should be conducted in his presence. Nachmani was in a very unpleasant position, but his firm truthfulness did not fail him. He admitted that he had stated many things against Christianity in his pamphlet, but he had written nothing which he had not employed in his disputation in the presence of the king; and he had asked for liberty of speech to utter these things from the king and the general of the Dominicans, and had obtained emphatic permission. He ought not to be made answerable and condemned for using expressions in his written account which had remained unrebuked in his oral defence.

The king and the commission acknowledged the justice of his vindication; nevertheless, in order to avoid provoking the Order of the Dominicans or De Penjaforte, Nachmani was sentenced to exile from his native land for two years, and his pamphlet was condemned to be burnt. The Inquisition had not yet attained an all-powerful position. The Dominicans were, however, by no means satisfied with this comparatively mild sentence, as they had expected a much more severe punishment. It appears that they intended to summon Nachmani before their own tribunal, where they would undoubtedly have condemned him to death. King Jayme offered his energetic opposition to this project. He gave to Nachmani a sort of charter which stated that he could only be charged upon this matter in the presence of the king (April, 1265). The Domini-

cans were naturally very much enraged at the mildness of the king, and at the apparent encroachment he had made on their judicial prerogative to decide upon questions of life and death. They appealed to Pope Clement IV., complaining that the king had permitted the author of a pamphlet which grossly insulted Christianity to go unpunished. The Pope, who at that time was fostering other grudges against the King of Aragon, addressed a very severe epistle to him. He upbraided him for a list of sins he had committed, and also added that he should strip Jews who held public offices of their honours and inflict heavy punishment on that arch-villain who, after taking part in a religious discussion, had published a pamphlet as if to dedicate a trophy to his heresy (1266). It cannot be fully ascertained whether the king obeyed the demands of the Pope regarding Nachmani or not, or what his sentence was. At any rate, it appears that one punishment was meted out to him, namely that he was to be banished from the country. Having already reached the age of seventy, Nachmani left his fatherland, his two sons, his school and his friends, and went into exile. He made his way in the direction of the Holy Land, being filled with the same intense longing as his kinsman-in-thought, Jehuda Halevi. He went yet a step further, when he remarked that it is the religious duty of every Jew to dwell in Judæa. Thus fate had done him a kindness in assisting him in the performance of a command, and helping to fulfil his ardent desire. He set out on his journey by ship, and landed at Jean d'Acre (1267), which at that time was still in the hands of the Christians. Thence he made haste to start for Jerusalem (9th Ellul—12th August).

Nachmani's feelings were very deeply stirred on beholding the condition of the Holy Land and the Sacred City. He found that his hopes were more

deceived than had been Jehuda Halevi's. The Mongols or Tartars, under the Sultan Hulagu, had committed fearful ravages in the land a few years previously (1260). This savage monarch also turned his attention to the Sultanate of Egypt, captured the fortresses on the Euphrates, Damascus, Aleppo, and Baalbek, and forced his way into Palestine. Jerusalem was transformed into a heap of ruins; all its inhabitants had forsaken it (1260). The Jews had also connected these extraordinary events with their hopes for the Messiah. The "hateful, deformed men of the East," who had subdued in the same manner both the oppressors of Israel, the followers of Jesus and of Mahomet, were perhaps to bring near unto Israel their hour of redemption. An enthusiast circulated a new revelation said to have been received by Simon bar Yochai, who was so frequently appealed to by the mystics, which prophesied that the devastations of the Mongols were the sufferings which should precede the coming of the Messiah.

Nachmani entered Palestine a few years later, when the Mongols had already been expelled from the country by the Sultan of Egypt. He beheld many ruins, and apostrophised them in eloquent words, saying, "The more holy a place is, the greater is its desolation; Jerusalem is more sacred than the rest of Judæa, which again outvies Galilee." The members of the congregation of the Holy City had many of them been slain, and others again had been cruelly ill-treated; the Scrolls of the Law had been rescued by some who fled to Shechem. Two thousand Mahometans and three hundred Christians had again settled in Jerusalem, but only one or two Jewish families were discovered there by Nachmani, and, as before, they enjoyed the privilege of farming the dye-works. The Jewish pilgrims, who had come to Jerusalem from Syria at the instigation of Nach-

mani, erected a synagogue. Upon Mount Olivet, opposite the ruins of the Temple, Nachmani breathed forth his deep sigh of distress over the desolation of the Holy City; but it was no poem of Zion that arose from his excited mind. Nachmani did not possess that divine gift of grace, the poetical genius of Jehuda Halevi, the fancy that was able to re-people deserts, to re-establish destroyed kingdoms, to mollify the effects of sadness, and to ease the heart from pain. He only uttered his plaintive song in the verses of other poets.

This exile from Spain did not rest content with erecting synagogues and organising communities in the land which for a long time had been his ideal home, but he also founded in it a place for the study of Jewish science, which had perished there since the conquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders. He gathered a circle of pupils around him, and people came in crowds even from the district of the Euphrates to hear him. Even Karaites are mentioned who sat at his feet, as for instance the man who became famous in later times, Aaron ben Joseph the Elder. Although he was no friend of free scientific thought, and thoroughly adhered to Talmudic Judaism, yet Nachmani, as a son of Spain, had obtained a knowledge of much general science, wherewith he was able to fertilise the desert of the Oriental Jews. Even his theory of the Kabbala, which he first transplanted into Palestine, where it afterwards spread far and wide, presented at least some points of view worthy of consideration, of which his contemporary co-religionists, either on account of their ignorance or their partiality for the Talmud, had no idea. He strove nevertheless, to explain the irrational in a rational manner, and for this purpose he worked hard to combat stupidity and indifference. He especially aroused an interest in the exposition of the Holy Writ, of which

the Oriental Jews were entirely ignorant. With this end in view, Nachmani composed his Commentary to the Bible, and especially his chief work, the Exposition of the Pentateuch. In this work he brought into play his peculiar genius, his warm and tender disposition, his power of clear thinking, and his mystical dreams. Like numberless men before and after him, he discovered his own idea of the world in this Book of Books, and interpreted it from his point of view. He did not treat deeply of the Kabbala in his Commentaries, but merely touched upon it lightly. But by this slight use of it he even elevated it to a higher degree. Narrow, enthusiastic minds searched only the more for that which underlay these suggestions, and took more notice of Nachmani's Kabbalistic hints, than of the clear ideas that were to be found in his work.

Nachmani's method of exegesis is not altogether free from the reproach of his contemporaries, chiefly that he had made attacks upon Maimuni, and had spoken very violently against Ibn Ezra in his Commentary. A devotee of philosophy and two enthusiastic students of it wrote a refutation of his works, and directed a satire against him in which the mysticism of Nachmani was especially made ridiculous. Pious men, on the other hand, held him in high honour as a particularly orthodox Rabbi, and just as his Talmudical works were diligently read and used, so his Commentary became a pet study of the mystics.

During his three years' stay in Palestine, Nachmani kept up a correspondence with his native land, whereby Judæa and Spain were brought into closer connection. He sent copies of his works to his sons and friends, and gave them descriptions of the condition of their original country, which was being continually harassed. He thus once again awoke that ardent longing for the Holy Land

which induced several persons of an enthusiastic turn of mind to emigrate thither. Nachmani died after having passed the age of seventy (about 1270), and his bones were interred in Chaifa near his companion in misfortune Yechiel of Paris, who had also gone into exile before him.

Nachmani exercised more effect upon his contemporaries and the succeeding age by his personality than by his writings. His numerous pupils, among whom the most renowned was Solomon ben Adret, made the teaching of Nachmani predominant among the Spanish Jews. Inspired and unwavering attachment to Judaism, deep regard for the Talmud and complete resignation to its decrees, a dilettante knowledge of the science of the time and of philosophy, recognition of mysticism as of extremely ancient date, combined with aversion to promulgating the knowledge of it, except with the intent of concentrating the attention profoundly upon its study, these are the distinctly characteristic traits of the Spanish Rabbis, and of the representatives of Judaism in the succeeding age. Henceforth Spanish Rabbis seldom occupied themselves at all with philosophy or with any other branch of science, or even with the exposition of the Bible. Their minds were exclusively directed towards the Talmud, whilst the sciences were cultivated only by non-Rabbinical scholars. The method of interpretation of the Bible on the model of Ibn Ezra and Kimchi was completely neglected.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE AGE OF SOLOMON BEN ADRET AND ASHERI.

Martyrs in Germany—The Jews of Hungary and Poland—The Council at Ofen—The Jews of Spain and Portugal—Solomon ben Adret, his character and writings—Raymond Martin's anti-Jewish Works—New antagonism to the Maimunist Philosophy—David Maimuni—Moses Taku—Meïr of Rothenburg—The Jews of Italy—Solomon Petit—Rudolph of Habsburg—Emigration of Jews from the Rhine Provinces—Sufferings of the English Jews—Expulsion of the Jews from England and Gascony—Saad-Addaula—Isaac of Acco.

1270—1306 C.E.

IF Jewish History were to follow the records of Chronicles, Memorial-books and Martyrologies, its pages would be filled with scenes of bloodshed, with a horrible exhibition of corpses, and would stand forth to make accusation against a doctrine which taught princes and nations to become common executioners and hangmen. For, from the thirteenth till the seventeenth century, the persecutions and massacres of the Jews increased with frightful rapidity and intensity, and only alternated with inhuman decrees issued both by the Church and the State, the aim and purport of all of which were to humiliate the Jews, to mark them with conspicuous brands, and to drive them to suicide. The prophet's description of the martyrdom of the servant of God, of the Messianic people, was fulfilled or repeated itself with terrible literalness: "He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is

dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment for the transgression of the nations was he stricken." The nations of Europe emulated each other in exercising their cruelty upon the Jews; and it was always the clergy who, in the name of a religion of love, stirred up this groundless hatred. It mattered little to the Jews whether they lived under proper government or under anarchy, for they suffered under the one no less than under the other.

In Germany they were slain by thousands through the troubles which arose after the death of the Emperor Frederick II., and which lasted till the crowning of Rudolph of Habsburg as Emperor, and were caused by the strife between the Ghibelli and the Guelfs. Every year martyrs fell, now in Weissenberg, Magdeburg, Armstadt, and now in Coblenz, Sinzig, Erfurt and other places. In Sinzig the whole congregation were burnt alive on a Sabbath in their synagogue. There were Christian German families who made a boast of it that they had burnt Jews, and in their pride assumed the name of "Jew-roaster." The representatives of the Church were also very anxious that the children who came to them to confession should not, by intimate intercourse with Jews, discover that they were like other human beings, and that their hearts should not be made accessible to sympathy. In Vienna, during the contest concerning the imperial throne of Germany, a large assembly of Churchmen met (12th May, 1267) under the leadership of the Papal Legate Gudeo. Most of the German prelates took part in it, and gave much attention to the question of the Jews. They solemnly confirmed every canonical law that Innocent III. and his successors had passed for the branding of the Jews. Jews were not allowed to have any Christian servants, were not admissible to any office of trust,

were not to be together with Christians in ale-houses and baths, and Christians were not permitted to accept any invitation of the Jews, nor to enter into discussion with them. As if the German people desired to show that it could surpass all nations in its abasement of the Jews, the members of the Council at Vienna did not rest content with the command that the German Jews should wear a mark on their outward dress, but they also compelled them to assume a disfiguring head-dress, which provoked the mockery of the lowest rascals of the streets; this was a pointed, horned hat or cap (*pileum cornutum*.) Bloody persecutions were the natural outcome of such exceptional marks.

In France the clergy were not required to urge on their princes, by threats, the degradation of the Jews. The saintly Louis, on his own account, busied himself with this matter. A year before his adventurous journey to Tunis, where he met his death, he ratified the canonical edict which ordained the wearing of the badges at the instigation of his much-beloved Pablo Christiani, the Jewish Dominican. He expressly ordered that this badge should be made of red felt or saffron-yellow cloth in the form of a wheel, and should be worn on the upper garment both on the breast and the back, "so that those who were thus marked should be recognised from all sides." Every Jew who was found without this badge was condemned for the first offence to forfeit his garment, and for the second to pay a fine of ten livres of silver into the treasury (March, 1269). The Jews of North France who were accustomed to ill-usage, and, as it were, dulled by it, easily yielded; but not so the Jews of Provence, who, being educated and in friendly intercourse with cultured Christians, would not submit to this ignominy. Hitherto they had contrived to escape from wearing the badge, and thought that they would be able to do so on this

occasion also. The congregations of the South of France thereupon sent deputies to take counsel for the general welfare; and the Provençal Jews elected two distinguished men, Mordechai ben Joseph, of Avignon, and Solomon, of Tarascon, who betook themselves to the Court, and tried to effect the abrogation of this law. At first the Jewish delegates met with success and returned home with the joyful news that the edict, which commanded the wearing of the badge, had been rescinded. But the successor of Louis, the equally bigoted and narrow-minded Philip III., re-introduced the law a year after his accession to the throne (1271). The Dominicans took great care to see that this edict was not transgressed. Several distinguished Jews, such as Mordechai, of Avignon, and others, who would not submit to this disgrace, were imprisoned. This wearing of a badge by the Jews remained in force in France till the time of their expulsion from the country.

The Church persecuted the sons of Jacob with its implacable hate up to the very border-line between Europe and Asia. The people of Hungary and Poland, who had not yet laid aside their primitive state of barbarity and their warlike ferocity, were in greater need of the services of the Jews than the nations and states of Central and Western Europe. The Jews, with their industrial habits and their skill in practical business, had perceived the rich productiveness of the districts lying around the Lower Danube, the Vistula, and on both sides of the Carpathian Mountains, had utilised and had first revealed this source of wealth. Despite the zeal with which the Papacy strove to deprive Jews of public offices, despite its efforts to restrain them from obtaining leases for working the salt mines and from farming the coinage and the taxes, it could not expel them from positions in which they were indispensable in preventing the

wealth from running to waste. The Hungarian king, Bela IV., the successor of Andreas II., made many contracts with Jews, from stern necessity, owing to the impoverished state into which the country had fallen by reason of the ravages of the Mongols. Bela also introduced for the benefit of the Jews under his dominion the law of Frederick the Valiant of Austria, which protected them against the unchecked will of the mob and the clergy, and which conceded to them the right of their own jurisdiction, and allowed them the control over their domestic affairs. The Papacy, however, turned its attention to the country of the Carpathians, partly for the purpose of kindling a new Crusade against the Mongols, and partly also in order to bring back to the Chair of Rome the schismatic adherents to the Greek Church by means of trickery and force. Its spiritual armies, the Dominicans and Franciscans, were despatched thither. These orders of friars instilled into the hitherto tolerant Magyars their own spirit of fanatical intolerance. In consequence of this a large Church Assembly met at Ofen (September, 1279), consisting of prelates from Hungary and the South of Poland. This Convocation was under the presidency of Philip, who was the Papal Legate for Hungary, Poland, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Lodomeria, and Galicia. To the Jews of these countries the Churchmen turned their attention, seeing that the Church was filled with a zealous desire to carry out their design upon these people. Jews and other inhabitants of the country who did not belong to the Roman Catholic Church were to be debarred from the right of farming the taxes, or from holding any public post. Bishops and other ecclesiastics of higher or lower degree who had entrusted the farming of the revenues of their sees to the hands of Jews were to be suspended from their holy

offices. Laymen, of whatsoever rank, were to be placed under a ban of excommunication till they had dismissed the Jewish contractors and employés, and had given bail that henceforward they would not accept or retain such men, “because it was very dangerous to permit Jews to dwell together with Christian families, and to have intimacy with them in courts and in private houses.” The Synod at Ofen also enacted that the Jews of both sexes dwelling in Hungarian territory (which included Hungary and the provinces of Southern Poland) should wear the figure of a wheel made of red cloth on the upper garment on the left side of the breast, and that they should never be seen without this badge. For the time being the exclusion of the Jews in Hungary and Poland from Christian society had little practical effect, for the Christians themselves mingled not alone with the Mahometans, but also with the schismatic Greek Catholics. These latter were also withheld from public offices. The Mahometans, too, were ordered to wear a badge, not of a red, but of a yellow colour. The Magyars and Poles had not yet arrived at so advanced a state of ecclesiastical intolerance as to be moved to pursue the course of extreme violent hostility employed by both the secular and regular clergy, which denied fire and water to men who did not wear any red or yellow sign. The first crop of this poisonous fruit was gathered about half a century later. The last king of the family of Arpad, Ladislaus IV., ratified and confirmed these extraordinary statutes of the Synod, in Hungary.

A similar state of affairs was also to be met with in the extreme West of Europe, in the Pyrenean peninsula. As Mahometans dwelt here also in proximity to Christians and Jews, the Church was not able to carry out its purposes which were prompted by intolerance, or to crush the Jews so easily. To this it must be added that by means of

their higher culture and their participation in all internal and foreign affairs, they were able to produce an effect upon their enemies. Alfonso the Wise, king of Castile, had indeed been active in procuring the establishment of a law which precluded Jews from filling State offices. Nevertheless, he himself proceeded to appoint Jews to important posts. Amongst others, he promoted Don Zag (Isaac) de Malea, the son of Don Meir, to be the royal treasurer. He was severely rebuked for doing so by Pope Nicholas III. (1279), but did not on this account remove the Jews from their offices. But when on one occasion he became very angry with Don Zag, and caused the effects of his displeasure to be felt by the Jews generally in an ebullition of rage—this was not owing to respect for the Church, but emanated from discordant family relations. Don Zag had some large sums of money of the State under his custody, which the king had destined for the carrying on of a campaign. The Infante Don Sancho, who cherished hostile intentions against his father, compelled the Jewish treasurer to surrender to him the public money. King Alfonso was extremely enraged at this action, and, in order to give a lesson to his son, he issued an order for Don Zag to be suddenly arrested, put in chains, and thus fettered to be conducted through the city where the Infante was staying at the time. Don Sancho in vain exerted himself to procure the freedom of the Jewish Almoxarif, who was suffering for no guilt of his own; but Alfonso at once ordered his execution (1280). His displeasure was also visited upon all the Jews of Castile, who were forced to expiate the act of their kinsman, a course which can scarcely be termed an oversight. The “wise” King Alfonso issued an injunction to imprison all the Jews on a certain Sabbath, and exacted heavy fines from them, at one time as much as 12,000 maravedis

every day. The congregations were also bound to replenish the empty treasury. In the meantime, the king began to suffer severely for the violent injustice he had done to Don Zag. His son was so embittered against him on this account, and felt himself so greatly offended in person by the ill-treatment and execution of Don Zag, that he openly rebelled against Alfonso, and drew to his side the greater portion of the nobility, the people, and the clergy. The unhappy king, who had indulged in such extravagant fancies at his accession, and who hoped, as the chosen Emperor of Germany, to found a monarchy over the whole world, felt himself so deserted in his old age, that in despair he appealed to a Mahometan prince to come to his help, "seeing that he was unable to find any protection or defender in his own land."

The condition of the Jews under Don Sancho, who ascended the throne when his father died through grief, was tolerable, but was dependent upon caprice. This king drew up proper regulations for the payment of the Jew-tax (*Juderia*) by the congregations of New Castile, Leon, Murcia, and the newly-acquired provinces in Andalusia (*la Frontera*). Hitherto every Jew had paid as a capitation-tax for himself and his family the sum of three maravedis (thirty dineros, almost equal to one shilling and sixpence) for each person. This was a reminder of the thirty pieces of silver which had been guiltily paid for the death of Jesus. Don Sancho called together deputies from the congregations to Huete, and named the total amount which every district was to render to the royal coffers. It was the duty of the deputies to formulate rules for the distribution of the payment among the congregations and families (Sept., 1290). The commission for the newly-acquired territory in Andalusia was composed of four men. If these men found themselves unable to come to an agreement,

they were to call in to their aid the committee of the congregation (Aljama) of Toledo, and especially the aged David Abudarham, a highly respected person of those days. The Jews of the kingdom of Castile, whose population numbered nearly 850,000 souls, contributed 2,780,000 maravedis as taxes, part of which was called the poll-tax, and part the service-tax. In these territories there existed over eighty Jewish communities, the most famous being in the capital Toledo, which, together with the adjacent smaller cities, numbered 72,000 Jews. There were also very large communities in Burgos, nearly 29,000 souls; in Carrion of 24,000, and similarly in Cuenca, Valladolid, and Avila. Over 3,000 Jews dwelt in Madrid, which at this time had not yet attained any degree of importance. The king permitted certain Jews who were his especial favourites to enjoy immunity from taxation. This was the cause of much dissension, seeing that the freedom enjoyed by these usually wealthy persons fell as a heavy burden upon the collective body of the community, and on those less endowed with worldly goods.

At this period, the Jews in the new kingdom of Portugal lived in very favourable circumstances, both under King Alfonso III. (1248—1279) and King Diniz (1279—1225). Not alone were they exempt from the canonical decrees which compelled the wearing of a distinctive sign and the payment of tithes to the Church, but prominent persons among them were also elected to fill very important positions. King Diniz had a Jewish Minister of Finance, named Judah, the Chief Rabbi of Portugal (Arraby Moor), who was so wealthy that he was able to advance large sums of money for the purchase of a city. Jews and Mahometans were commissioned to obtain redress from the rebellious clergy, who, at the constant instigation of the Papacy, strove to alter the national laws in ac-

cordance with the canonical decisions ; this attempt kindled fierce strife between the monarchy and the Church. In order to be at peace with the quarrelsome Church, King Diniz at length yielded, and introduced the canonical laws into his country, but did not carry them into effect in real earnest.

Thus the Jews in the Pyrenean peninsula, in spite of the prevailing encroachments of the Church, in spite of its wicked desire to humiliate them, and the fanatical preaching and disputations of the mendicant friars, maintained a more advantageous position than was held by Jews in the remaining countries of Europe. Here the pulse of spiritual life beat in a most healthy condition, and the flourishing appearance of Judaism had its mainspring: questions of vital importance were started, discussed, debated upon with passionate energy, and finally decided. Here the contest concerning the doctrines of Judaism waxed warm, and now the scholarship and erudition of the Spanish Jews gradually outstripped that of the inhabitants of the other countries and districts. Spain was once again, as in the ante-Maimonic epoch, elevated to the dignity of representing the centre of Judaism for the space of two centuries, and this was effected by a Rabbi of remarkable genius. This Rabbi was Solomon ben Abraham Ben Adret, of Barcelona (abbreviated into Rashba, born about 1245, died 1310). He was a man of penetrating and clear understanding, full of moral earnestness, of pure and unwavering belief, of mild temperament, combined with an energetic character, by reason of which he pursued with perseverance anything which he had discovered to be right. The Talmud, with its labyrinthal tracks and its hidden corners, with all the explanations and supplements of the Spanish and the French Tossafist schools, presented no more difficulty to Ben Adret than a child's primer, and he exercised his sway over

this enormous mass of material with such ease as aroused the wonderment of his contemporaries. His straightforward mind guarded him, however, from that subtle sophistry which had already begun to display itself in the treatment of the Talmud. Ben Adret immediately forced his way to the core of a question in Talmudical discussions, and did not stoop to employ stratagems and subterfuge. A Spaniard by birth, he did not altogether spurn the knowledge of general science, nor disdain to pay some regard to philosophy, as long as it kept within its own province, acknowledged the doctrines of religion, and did not intrude with the desire of becoming a ruling power. He felt himself compelled to strip those Agadic stories, which gave offence, of their simple literalness, and to explain them in a rational manner. If, however, he only displayed a spirit of tolerance towards philosophy, he had a profound respect for the Kabbala, seeing that his master Nachmani had paid such great homage to it. He did not dive very deeply into the subject, and observed that his contemporaries who occupied themselves with the study, were also not very profoundly initiated, and that their pretended antiquity was merely vain boasting. He desired that the Kabbala should be taught only in secret (esoterically), and should not be expounded in public. Ben Adret's greatest power, nevertheless, lay in his acquaintance with the Talmud: because this represented for him, as for his teachers, the alpha and omega of all wisdom. In this he lived with his whole soul. Every Talmudical expression appeared to him to be an unfathomable well of the profoundest knowledge, and a mind completely absorbed in the study was necessary in order to inquire into its depths.

Such then was the nature of this man, to whom there fell the task of bearing aloft the standard of

Judaism in these greatly disturbed times, and of encountering the excesses that arose from two sides—from the philosophers and from the Kabbalists. For forty years the authority of the Rabbi of Barcelona was paramount in religious affairs affecting Judaism, not alone in Spain but also in other parts of Europe, as well as in Asia and Africa. Questions for his decision were sent to him from France, Germany, Bohemia, Italy, and even from St. Jean d'Acre (Acco) in Palestine and from North Africa. Students from Germany sat at his feet to hear him expound the Talmud. This is the more noteworthy, inasmuch as the German rabbis were proud of the learning of their own country, and would not admit the superiority of the Academies of any other country over their own. When David, the grandson of Maimuni, was in great need, he turned to Ben Adret to obtain assistance. David Maimuni (born 1233, died 1300) who, like his father and his grandfather, was the Prince (Nagid) over all the congregations in Egypt, had been calumniated by some evil-minded enemies before the Sultan Kilavun, and accused of some unknown crime. He put his detractors, it is true, under a ban of excommunication, but it appears that he did not effect any real result thereby. At all events, David hoped to be placed on a safer footing, if he could succeed in appeasing the Sultan by gifts of money. He applied to Ben Adret, and laid the history of his sufferings before him; his request met with a very ready response. Ben Adret sent an envoy with a letter to the Spanish congregations to collect funds, and the communities each joyfully contributed large sums of money to aid the grandson of the highly-revered Maimuni. Whenever any event of importance took place within Jewish circles, Ben Adret was appealed to for advice, or in order to claim his intervention.

The unique distinction which was enjoyed by the Rabbi of Barcelona can certainly not be altogether attributed to his comprehensive knowledge ; seeing that at that time there lived many independent learned rabbis, whilst even in Spain there was one equal to him. His fellow-student and countryman, Aaron Halevi (born about 1235, died after 1300), was equally well grounded in the Talmud, like him composed works on the subject, and was not his inferior even in secular knowledge.

Ben Adret, nevertheless, exercised supreme control over the congregations, both far and near. This superiority was conceded to him on account of his energetic action in continually taking up the cudgels on behalf of Judaism against attacks both from within and without.

The clouds, pregnant with destruction, which were to be poured down upon the Jews of the Pyrenean peninsula two centuries later, began to collect already in the time of Ben Adret. The plans, which the fanatical General of the Dominicans, Raymund de Penjaforte, had devised for the conversion of the Jews, were put into effect during his lifetime. The attempts made in Spain during the period of the West Goths, on the one hand to incite to action the princes and legislators by means of anti-Jewish writings, and, on the other, to prevail upon the Jews to desert their faith, were in the greater part renewed. There now arose a monk who belonged to the institution which had been established by Raymund de Penjaforte for the purpose of instructing the Dominican monks in the literature of the Jews and Arabs as a means of conversion. This man introduced for the first time in Europe the weapons of learning in the contest against the Jews. Raymund Martin wrote two books full of malevolent hostility to Judaism, whose titles already announce that the prison cell and the sword were to be employed against its adherents :

“Bridle for the Jews,” and “Dagger of Faith” (*Capistrum Judæorum*, and *Pugio Fidei*). Martin possessed a thorough knowledge of Biblical and Rabbinical literature, and was in reality the first Christian who was even better acquainted with Hebrew than the Church Father Jerome. He read with apparent ease the Agadic works, the writings of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Maimuni, and Kimchi, and laid them under contribution in furthering his object, which was to show that, not alone in the Bible but also in the Rabbinical writings, Jesus was recognised as the Messiah and the Son of God. As might be expected, Raymund Martin laid especial stress upon the argument that the Jewish laws, granted even that they were a revelation from God, were not intended to have force for ever, and particularly at the time of the Messiah they would lose their great value. To demonstrate this point, he adduced apparent proofs from the Agadic literature of the Talmud. He also urged that the Talmudists had tampered with the text of the Bible.

Although Raymund Martin’s “Dagger of Faith” was not properly ground and pointed, and the composition is so devoid of spirit, that no person could be misled by it, yet it made a great impression because of the amount of learning displayed therein. By means of the subjoined Latin translation of the Hebrew text, Christians now for the first time were able to peer into the recesses of the Jewish world of thought, which had hitherto been an impenetrable secret to them. Dominicans, eager for the fray, were provided with weapons from this well-stocked arsenal, and aimed blows with them, which to the superficial observer appeared to strike the air only, but which were regarded by Solomon Ben Adret as fraught with future danger. He very frequently entered into conversation with Christian theologians, and, as

it appears, also with Raymund Martin. He heard from them various statements, and all sorts of arguments to prove the divine character of Christianity, and was afraid lest weak-minded and injudicious persons would be induced thereby to abandon the Jewish belief. In order to counteract this, he wrote a small pamphlet, in which by brief propositions he refuted all those statements which were employed at the time by the Christians to injure Judaism. In this refutation and correction of errors Ben Adret manifested a remarkable spirit of moderation and calmness: no bitter and passionate utterance escaped his lips.

His polemical writings against a Mahometan writer are much more severe. This author with inconsiderate criticism entered into conflict with all the three revealed religions alike, with Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and directed his attacks very cleverly against their weak points. The defence of Ben Adret is indeed feeble: it proves the correctness of the Bible from the Bible itself, and combats his critical opponent with Talmudical weapons. He thus continually reasons in a circle, and he did not achieve any glorious victory by this means. Ben Adret's activity and the success of his labours are more discernible in Jewish affairs than in external matters. His time was one of great agitation, in which the distinguishing lines between science and religion became more pronounced: piety daily widened the gulf between it and thought; and thought continually became more separated from the area of religion. The Kabbala, which always caused keen discussion, mingled itself in the fierce battle of opinions and religious beliefs, and cast its projecting shadows over the but partially illuminated basis of Judaism. The disputed questions whether Maimuni was to be termed a heretic or not, whether his philosophical writings were to be shunned or to be altogether condemned to the

flames—these questions now burst into new life, and caused divisions in the minds of men. In Spain and in Southern France, the strife had been extinguished by the solemn repentance of the former anti-Maimunist, Jonah I. Since his time, the rabbis of these congregations held Maimuni in great reverence, and made use of his ideas with more or less skill and lucidity of thought, and pronounced them as indisputably conducive to the strengthening of religion. Even the most orthodox Talmudists in Spain and Provence quoted sayings of Maimuni in their expositions upon religious questions. But the battle for and against Maimuni was again waged in another scene of action. In the German and Italian communities, it inflamed the minds of men anew, penetrated as far as Palestine, and, as it were, enfolded all Judaism in its embrace. The German Jews who hitherto had never shown any liking for science, and who had limited their thoughts to the narrow circle of the Talmud, were unacquainted with the work of the active spirits of Montpellier, Saragossa, and Toledo. They did not suspect that Maimuni had left, in addition to his Code of religious laws, which they recognised, some writings of a more questionable nature. They were now rudely awakened from their happy religious slumber, and their minds agitated with thoughts upon the wide extent of the Maimunist philosophy of religion.

The man who rekindled the torch of this bitter strife was a learned Talmudist, named Moses ben Chasdai Taku (Tachau?) (who flourished about 1250—1290). Being a very earnestly orthodox believer of the most remarkable description, he identified all philosophical and rational views concerning Judaism, with a disavowal of the truths of the Torah and the Talmud. Taku was quite logical in his opposition. He denounced as heretics not only Maimuni and Ibn-Ezra, but also the Gaon

Saadia, because the latter, by his writings on philosophy, had been the first to treat upon this subject, and point the way to others. This new study had thus originated with him, as before his time it had been unheard of in Jewish circles. Arguing on logical grounds, Taku rightly affirmed that these men had paved the way for the Karaites. It was the bounden duty of every pious Jew, who believed in the written and oral law, to keep himself aloof from their folly. Moses Taku certainly did not stand isolated among the German Rabbis in this remarkable view.

Other men, who had been nurtured at the same spring, were undoubtedly in entire agreement with him: but they did not all possess the courage or versatility to take part in a contest against the well-armed representatives of the philosophical school of thought. The most distinguished among them was Meïr ben Baruch of Rothenburg on the Taube (born 1220, died 1293), on whom the last rays of the decaying school of the Tossafists continued to linger. He was, indeed, the first official Chief Rabbi in the German kingdom, and probably received this title from the hands of the Emperor Rudolph, the first of the House of Habsburg. Although he is sometimes reckoned among the Tossafists, yet his Talmudical writings reveal more comprehensive erudition than original penetrating ingenuity. He can in no way be compared with Ben Adret, nevertheless he was an authority in Germany and Northern France, though his piety was of an exaggerated kind. It had been agreed by the French Rabbis that in winter rooms might be warmed on the Sabbath by Christians. Meïr of Rothenburg would not allow the Sabbath to be desecrated in this indirect way. He therefore tightly fastened up the doors of the ovens in his house, so as to prevent the servant-maid from doing any work, as she might heat

his oven without being directed to do so. In general, the German Jews were more scrupulous than those of other countries, and observed the fast of the Day of Atonement for two consecutive days.

What position the German Rabbis took up in reference to the newly revived denunciation of science and of Maimuni hurled by Moses Taku is not authentically known, but it is permissible to make some inference concerning it from an event which was the cause of much scandal elsewhere.

A Kabbalist of France, or of the Rhineland, who had emigrated to Jean d' Acre (Acco), was stirred up by a still more intense zeal than Moses Taku. This man, whose name was Solomon Petit, made it the aim of his life to kindle the torch which should cause the wholesale burning of the writings of Maimuni, and plant the standard of the Kabbala upon the grave of philosophy. At Acco he gathered a circle of pupils around him whom he initiated into the knowledge of the secret art, and to whom he related marvellous stories in order to cast suspicion upon philosophy. Acco was at this time a very nest of Kabbalists and mystics, among whom the greater number were pupils of Nachmani. Although the days of this town were numbered, it being the last centre of the consolidated kingdom of Jerusalem ruled by Christians, these dabblers in the mystic art conducted themselves as if they were destined to remain there for ever. Solomon Petit thought that he could command sufficient support to enable him to venture upon carrying his plan into execution: this was to publish once more a sentence of condemnation upon Maimunist writings, to forbid under penalties all scientific study, and to excommunicate men engaged in independent research. His fanaticism was especially directed against the "Guide" (Moré) of Maimuni; according to his opinion it deserved to be removed

from the reach of all persons, like other heretical works. He enlisted many followers in Palestine to aid him in this attack on heresy. Who would not obey, when the voice of the Holy Land had caused itself to be heard? Who would attempt to justify what it had condemned? But the zealot Solomon Petit met with unexpected opposition.

At the head of the Eastern congregations at this time, there stood an energetic man, Yishai ben Chiskiya, who was known to have obtained the title of Prince and Exilarch (Resh-Galuta) from the temporal authorities. The communities of Palestine, as far as they were under the rule of the Mahometans and of the Egyptian Sultan Kilavun, naturally belonged to his diocese, and he also claimed obedience from the community at Acco, although this was in the hands of the Crusaders. The Exilarch Yishai held Maimuni in the highest respect, and befriended his grandson, David, the Nagid of Egypt. As soon as he received information concerning the doings of Solomon Petit, the mystic of Acco, he dispatched a sharp letter to him, and threatened to interdict him if he uttered any more words of blame against Maimuni and his writings. Several Rabbis, whom Yishai had called in, to add the weight of their authority to his, also expressed themselves in the same sense. But Solomon Petit was not the man to permit himself to be overpowered by such obstacles. He undertook a return journey to Europe, presented himself in the large congregations, and revealed the danger of the Maimunistic writings before the Rabbis and distinguished persons. He imposed upon them by his secret lore of the Kabbala, succeeded in persuading many to agree with him, and induced them to announce, in personally attested documents, that the philosophical writings of Maimuni contained heresies, that they deserved to be either removed or altogether burnt, and that no

Jew ought to read them. Nowhere did Solomon Petit meet with such hearty support as from the hands of the German rabbis. They showed their approval of his action in letters, even those of them who had recently been in agreement with the Exilarch Yishai.

Being assured of the assistance of the German and of some of the French rabbis, Solomon Petit started on his second journey to Italy, and sought to obtain partisans in that country also; but there he met with the least response, for just as Maimuni found fresh antagonists in Germany, so new admirers of him sprang up in Italy. The Italian communities, who hitherto had rivalled the Germans in ignorance of every kind, had just awakened from the state of unenlightenment; and their recently opened eyes turned to enjoy the light which emanated from Maimuni. Their political condition was not unfavourable; in fact, within the precincts of the Chair of Peter they were at that time in more propitious circumstances than any of the Jews of Central Europe. The canonical laws against the Jews were nowhere more disregarded than in Italy. The small States and territorial lands, into which the country was split up at this time, were too jealous of their liberty to permit the clergy to exert any influence over their domestic concerns. In fact, the city of Ferrara passed a statute in favour of the Jews, which granted many liberties to them, and contained a clause stating, that a magistrate (*podestà*) could neither be absolved by the Pope nor by anybody else, who deprived them of these privileges. Not only had the King of Sicily, Charles of Anjou, a Jewish physician, Farraj Ibn Solomon, who was held in high repute as a scholar (under the name of Farragut) also in Christian circles, but even the Pope himself transgressed the canonical decree which forbade any one taking medical assistance

from a Jew. One of the four popes who reigned during the short period of thirteen years (1279 to 1291) entrusted his holy person to the care of a Jewish physician, Isaac ben Mordecai, who bore the title of Maestro Gajo.

The prosperity now enjoyed by Italy in consequence of the wide extension of its commerce which now greatly flourished, and the fondness for art and poetry which had taken its rise at this time during the youth of the poet Dante, had their effects upon the Italian Jews, and aroused them from their hitherto dormant condition.

The philosophical writings of Maimuni made their influence in favour of the higher culture felt upon the minds of the Italian Jews. About this time, they began to occupy themselves in real earnest with the "Guide": intellectual men delivered discourses upon this profound work. If the origin of this revival may be traced back to Anatoli, at all events Hillel of Verona must be considered as the founder and promulgator of the method of scientific thought among the Italian Jews. Maimuni had no warmer admirer than this true-hearted and energetic man, who, though somewhat limited in range of ideas, was therefore the more lovable. Hillel ben Samuel of Verona (born about 1220, died about 1295), a zealous pupil in the Talmud of Jonah Gerundi, in no way partook of the spirit of intolerance and hatred of heresies which characterised his teacher. He had been a witness of the latter's genuine atonement for calling in the aid of the Dominicans in his fanatical onslaught against the writings of Maimuni, and since that time Hillel held Maimuni in almost godlike reverence. He avoided partiality and exclusive attention to the Talmud, and turned his mind also to general studies. He made himself so thoroughly acquainted with the Latin language—a rare exception in this respect among the Jews of

his day—that he was able to compose in Latin with great ease ; he translated a work upon surgery from this language into Hebrew. The Hebrew style of Hillel was moreover regulated and coloured by the peculiarities of Latin syntax. He wrote beautiful, clear and terse Hebrew prose, which was entirely free from the verbose phraseology and embellished flourishes of the style then in vogue. At first, he practised the profession of medicine in Rome ; afterwards in Capua and Ferrara, and in his old age in Forli.

With the whole strength of his intellectual powers Hillel became absorbed in Maimuni's writings on the philosophy of religion, notwithstanding which he remained true to his religious belief, to which he clung with great tenacity. The miracles in the Bible and the Talmud were not explained in fanciful allegories by him, but on the contrary retained their character as real events. About this time in Italy there lived two logical thinkers, one a native-born Italian, Sabbatai ben Solomon of Rome—in his time a very distinguished personage—and the other a Spaniard who had emigrated to Rome, Serachya ben Isaac, a member of the renowned family of Ben Shaltiel-Chen (Gracian?), whose home was in Barcelona. The latter of these two was especially famous as a physician and proficient in the Aristotelian philosophy, and he was also a passionate opponent of the belief in miracles. How eager was the desire of the Italian Jews to obtain a knowledge of the sciences is well illustrated by an anecdote related with much wit by an Italian Jewish poet. A Jewish scholar from Toledo arrived at Perugia with eighty books upon science—an important library in those days—and, in order to continue his journey without this encumbrance, he tied them up together and handed them over to the charge of certain of the inhabitants to preserve them for him.

He had scarcely left the place, when those eager seekers after knowledge, unable to repress their curiosity, broke open the parcel and possessed themselves of the mental treasures that it contained. The young poet Immanuel Romi, who perhaps was concerned in this affair, drank in with all the vigour of his ardent mind, the spirit which Hillel of Verona and Serachya-Chen had distilled for the Italian Jews from the writings of Maimuni.

It is quite obvious that in the presence of this revival of culture among the congregations of Italy, the Kabbalist Solomon Petit could not possibly meet with support in his missionary journey to Italy to enlist adherents for his denunciation of Maimuni. The fanatic was also cunning enough not to give any hint in this land of his intentions. When Solomon Petit arrived at Jean d'Acre (Acco) with the letters against Maimuni written by the German Rabbis, he set to work to encourage his confederates, who were intimidated by the threats of the princely Rabbi of Damascus, to arouse a fresh strife, and so induce them to pronounce a sentence of excommunication against Maimuni's philosophical writings. The Kabbalists of this community readily assented to his plan, condemned the "Guide" of Maimuni to be burnt, and threatened with excommunication all who henceforth studied it. The youthful Kabbala already felt itself so powerful, that it imagined itself able to extirpate the very firmly-rooted spirit of inquiry from the midst of Judaism. It appears that the tomb of Maimuni at Tiberias was desecrated by these Kabbalists. Instead of the laudatory inscription written on the stone, they substituted this: "Moses Maimuni, the excommunicated heretic." Meanwhile the whole community at Acco did not agree with this disgraceful charge of heresy: there were also among them warm admirers of Maimuni, and strenuous opponents to his unwarranted condem-

nation. Thus there broke out a fierce strife in the very heart of the community, which led to important results. The news of this contention rapidly spread throughout the other countries which were connected with Palestine, and called forth universal indignation. Hillel of Verona, who had been a witness to the destructive consequences of the contest in France for and against Maimuni, manifested a spirit of energetic activity in order to prevent a repetition of this warfare. He sent letters to David Maimuni and the congregations in Egypt and Babylonia (Irak), and proposed that they should extinguish once for all the destructive flame of dissension kindled by the writings of Maimuni, and which so often blazed up afresh. Hillel's plan was as follows: The most distinguished Rabbis of the Jews in the East should assemble at a Synod at Alexandria, and summon the German rabbis who had supported Solomon Petit to justify their conduct. If their contention was found able to stand the test, and they could prove that the philosophical writings of Maimuni contained actual heresies and notions opposed to the Bible and the Talmud (which Hillel himself believed impossible), then it was only just that Maimuni's writings should be condemned, and removed from the hands of the public. If, however, the German rabbis were unable to defend and justify their accusations of heresy, then they should be compelled, under penalty of excommunication, to withdraw the universal condemnation which they had passed upon the "Guide" of Maimuni, and to abstain for the future from stirring up discord and division by their opposition to Maimuni's philosophy. The rabbis of Babylonia, who possessed authority from the days of old, were to pronounce judgment.

This energetic action in Europe, and the strenuous exertions of Hillel were not really necessary

in order to disturb the work of the mystics in Acco. Solomon Petit and his Kabbalistic faction stood altogether alone in the East. As soon as David Maimuni received information of the ban of excommunication passed upon his grandfather, he journeyed to Acco, where he met with support from the section of the community which was opposed to the fanatical desire for condemnation. He also addressed letters to all congregations, calling upon them to take up the defence of the honour of his grandfather against the Jewish Dominicans, the heretical and narrow-minded Kabbalists. Everywhere he met with approval. The Prince of the Captivity at Mosul, named David ben Daniel, who traced his origin back as far as King David, and who was the head of the communities on this side of the Tigris, declared that he should place Petit under a very severe ban of excommunication till he ceased his attempts to create a disturbance (Iyar, 1289). Eleven Rabbis of his College signed this threat against the heretic-hunter of Acco. The Exilarch of Damascus also, Yishai ben Chiskiya, who had already issued a warning against these attacks on Maimuni, again brought his influence to bear upon the subject. Together with his College of twelve associates, he pronounced a ban of excommunication (Tammuz—June, 1289) not merely against Solomon Petit and his partisans, but also against any person who dared to speak in terms of contempt and disrespect of Maimuni, or who accused his writings of heresy. All persons who possessed any books hostile to Maimuni were commanded to yield them up to David Maimuni or his sons, as quickly as possible, so that no misuse might be made of them. If any persons who at the time dwelt in Acco, or who would immigrate thither at some later time, refused to obey the decisions of the Prince of the Captivity and his colleagues, it was

incumbent upon every Jew to employ all possible means to render these men incapable of doing any harm, and even to call in the aid of the secular authorities.

The congregation of Safet, which had by this time become well-known, also gave their assent to the edict in favour of Maimuni. The rabbi of the town, Moses ben Jehuda Cohen, together with his colleagues, and a portion of the community of Acco, repeated at the grave of Maimuni in Tiberias the formula of excommunication against all who continued their obstinate enmity against him, against those who refused to surrender writings accusing him of heterodoxy, and especially against all who disobeyed the decisions of the Prince of the Captivity: "Seeing that they who incite discord in the communities deny the Torah which preaches peace, and they mock at God, who is peace itself." All the congregations and rabbis in Palestine took up the cause of Maimuni. The members of the community of Bagdad, who at this time basked in the sunshine of the favour of a prominent Jewish statesman, and at whose head as the chief of the Academy was Samuel Cohen ben Daniel, also expressed themselves in the same sense (Tishri—September, 1289). The Kabbalists of Acco were condemned by public opinion, and the Exilarch of Damascus took special pains to acquaint the European communities with what had occurred. The testimonials in favour of Maimuni were forwarded to Barcelona, probably to Solomon ben Adret. The prolific philosopher and poet Shem-Tob Falaquera took advantage of the favourable opportunity to publish a vindication of the "Guide" of Maimuni, and gave it as his opinion that only very few, perhaps only one person—who was able to read this work on the philosophy of religion in the original—could render it sufficient justice. But in Spain, Maimuni

required no advocates: for it was seldom that any one ventured to speak in derogatory terms of his opinions. If pious Spaniards here and there found something to cavil at, they, nevertheless, paid great honour to Maimuni's name.

The German rabbis, by whom Solomon Petit had been supported, had no leisure to reflect upon the issue of the strife concerning Maimuni. They were too much occupied with their own affairs. During the reign of the Emperor Rudolph of Habsburg, such severe troubles befell the German communities that they determined on emigrating *en masse*. Rudolph, who from a poor knight had become the ruler over the German kingdom, had no regard for their lives, but only for their money. His coffers were altogether empty, and he was in need of means to enable him to subdue the proud nobles, and to lay the foundation of the power of the House of Habsburg. The Jews had indeed paid large sums of money to the poor duke, to whom the crown of an empire had unexpectedly fallen: among others was Amschel Oppenheimer, his creditor. But these voluntary advances did not satisfy him, and did not prevent him from extorting larger sums from them. Every favour which he conceded them, and every protection which he extended to them, was immediately followed by the payment of a stipulated present of money. As Rudolph always kept his own advantage in view, he regularly accompanied a mark of his favour displayed towards the Jews by a restriction, so that he might always have them under his control.

He confirmed the privileges of the old community of Ratisbon, which they had possessed from ancient days, among other things, that they should exercise their own jurisdiction in civil affairs, and that none of their members could be convicted of any crime without the corroborative evidence of a Jewish witness. At the instigation

of the Bishop, however, he promulgated a decree that the Jews of Ratisbon should remain at home during Easter and fasten their doors and windows, so that they should not gaze on the roads and in the streets at "the ignominy of the Christian faith." For the congregations in Austria, the Emperor Rudolph confirmed the statute in favour of the Jews passed by the Archduke Frederick the Valiant, which afforded protection against vexation and murder. On the other hand, a year later, he issued a special decree to the citizens of Vienna, which solemnly declared the unfitness of the Jews to fill public offices. Pope Innocent IV. had exonerated them from the charge of child-murder for the purposes of the Passover. Pope Gregory X. (1271—78) at the request of the Jews, had issued a Bull which ordained that they were not to be dragged by brute force to undergo baptism, and that no injury was to be inflicted upon their persons or their property. The Emperor Rudolph corroborated the truth of these Bulls, adding "that it was not true that the Jews fed upon the heart of a slain child on the days of the Passover festival." In order that they might be able to live under his protection, assured of the imperial grace, he confirmed and repeated all the edicts which had been issued by the Popes in their favour, and especially the one which declared that Jews could only be condemned on the valid evidence of Jews and Christians. He also afforded them many other means of protection, and inflicted punishment upon some murderers of innocent Jews in Lorch. In spite of this, because the Germans of old had been accustomed to anarchy, there arose, during his reign, a large number of blood-accusations, and massacres of Jews, which the Emperor partly left unpunished, and partly encouraged.

About Easter time a dead Christian child was discovered at Mayence, and now again arose the lying

rumour that the Jews of Mayence had murdered it. In vain did the Archbishop Werner, of Mayence, the Lord Chancellor of the kingdom, exert himself with great energy to appease the excited mob, to institute a regular trial against the accused, and to discover the guilty persons. The Christians, who by one glance at the corpse became filled with intense fury, attacked their Jewish neighbours on the second day of Easter (or the last day but one of Passover, 19th April, 1283), slew ten persons, and pillaged the Jewish houses. The persecution would have been much more bloody, had not the Archbishop Werner actively intervened for the defence of "his" Jews. The Emperor Rudolph is reported to have commanded an inquiry to be made into the matter later on, to have confirmed the judgment passed upon the Jews, and to have acquitted the citizens of Mayence from all blame. He prohibited the use of any property that had been obtained by usury, and would not allow it to be employed for the purposes of the Church. In other respects, the Emperor Rudolph was by no means so conscientious. On the same day as the attack in Mayence, twenty-six Jews were put to death in Bacharach. Two years later (11th October, 1285) heartrending sufferings befell the congregation of Munich. At this place also the false charge was circulated, that the Jews had purchased a Christian child from an old woman, and had killed it. Without waiting for any judicial sentence concerning these charges, the infuriated populace fell upon the Jews, and put to death all who fell into their hands. The remaining Jews had fled for refuge to the synagogue. Thereupon the adherents of the religion of love procured some inflammable material, placed it around the building, and set fire to the House of Prayer. One hundred and eighty persons, old and young, were thus burnt to death. Not long after this, more than forty Jews of the Upper Weser, near Bacharach, and others

again in Boppard, were innocently murdered (1286). The charge against them was that they had secretly drawn out the blood of a pious man, called by the people "the good Werner." The readily credulous people indeed asserted that rays of light issued from his corpse, on which account this so-called holy spot became a shrine to which pilgrimages were made. The Emperor Rudolph, however, some time later removed all claims of this man to sanctity, and absolved the Jews from the guilt of his death.

There can be no doubt that it was owing to the annually repeated persecutions, the insecurity of their existence, and the wretched state of their condition, that the Jews of several congregations resolved to shake off the dust of Germany from their feet, and, together with their wives and children, to wander forth and seek a new home. Many families from the cities of Mayence, Worms, Speyer, Oppenheim, and others, in the Wetterau, left their rich possessions in order to go across the sea. At the head of these emigrants was the most famous Rabbi of Germany, Meir of Rothenburg, who was revered as a saint. He also wandered forth, together with his whole family, to make his way to Syria (Spring, 1286). A rumour was current that in this land the Messiah would make his appearance, and would redeem unhappy Israel from his troubles.

At this time all eyes in the East were turned with astonishment to a Jewish statesman, the most distinguished personage at the Court of a Mongol Grand Khan, whose dominion extended from the Lower Euphrates and the borders of Syria as far as the Caspian Sea. The Mongols, or Tartars, had founded a large kingdom in Persia, which was only nominally subject to the Khanate of Mongolia and China. After Hulagu, the founder of this kingdom, and his son Abaka (Abagha), his second

son, succeeded, who embraced Islam and assumed the name of Ahmed. The Mongols of Persia were, however, dissatisfied with this proceeding: Ahmed was dethroned and put to death. His successor, in the Perso-Mongolian kingdom, was Argun, the son of Abaka (1284-91.) Argun displayed a marked aversion to Islam, and a special liking for Jews and Christians. This Grand Khan had a Jewish physician, named Saad-Addaula (probably the same as Mordecai Ibn Alcharbiya), a man possessed of wide learning, acute intellect, political insight, and disinterested character. Although he had frequent dealings with Mongols, yet he was better acquainted with Arabic than with their language. He possessed a handsome appearance, charming manners, and the suppleness of a diplomatist. He also had a taste for poetry and science, and in later years promoted their study. Saad-Addaula practised as a doctor in Bagdad, where Argun very often held his Court. The Grand Khan once fell ill, and was restored to health by Saad. He thereupon took the physician, to whom he owed his recovery, into his confidence upon State matters, and learnt from him particulars of the condition of the revenue, which the officials and courtiers, out of avarice, had diligently concealed from the Grand Khan. From that time Saad-Addaula became his favourite and counsellor, and rose step by step to the position of the highest State official.

Many wealthy Jews of the districts of the Rhine and the Maine had already started on their journey; and Meir of Rothenberg reached Lombardy, together with his whole family. He was only waiting for the members of his community in order to take ship in Italy, and, together with other exiles, to steer their course towards the East into the haven of safety. Unfortunately, Meir was recognised by a baptised Jew, who, in

the train of the Bishop of Basle, was passing through the same town. At the instigation of the Bishop, the captain, Meinhard of Görz, took him prisoner, and delivered him to the authorities. The Emperor Rudolph ordered him to be placed under arrest in the tower of Ensisheim, in Alsace (4th Tammuz—19th June, 1286). The Emperor did not intend by this course to punish the runaway rabbi, but to keep him safe and prevent him from exiling himself. He, indeed, was afraid lest by the departure of the Jews *en masse* the imperial income obtained from these Serfs of the Chamber would suffer heavy loss. Meir's imprisonment was, therefore, not a severe one. He was permitted to receive visits, to instruct his pupils, and to perform all the functions of a Rabbi, provided that he did not go away from the place.

The German Jews were, however, unable to feel at ease as long as their highly respected chief remained in custody: they, therefore, sent deputies to the Emperor Rudolph, when he paid a visit to the Rhine country (in the year 1288). Being then, as usual, in need of money, he entered into negotiations with them. The Jews offered him 20,000 marks of silver if he would inflict punishment upon the murderers of the Jews of the Upper Weser and Boppard, release Meir from custody, and guarantee to them security against murderous outrages at the hands of the populace. The Emperor acceded to their terms, and laid a heavy fine upon the citizens of the Upper Weser and Boppard. Meir was not, however, released from prison, either because the Emperor thought to make capital of the respect of the Jews for their rabbi, and to extract large sums of money from them, or, as is related, because Meir himself refused to be liberated on these terms. He feared that the precedent, of imprisoning the rabbis to extort ransoms from the Jews, would be frequently resorted to in after

times, and therefore continued for five years longer under arrest. From prison he sent replies to inquiries addressed to him, and composed several works there. He died in prison, and the successors of Rudolph kept his corpse unburied for fourteen years, in order to extract money in this way from the congregations. At length a childless man from Frankfort, named Süsskind Alexander Wimpfen, ransomed the body for a large sum, and interred it in Worms. The only reward, which the noble Wimpfen demanded for himself, was that his bones might be laid by the side of the pious Rabbi.

About this time the most bitter misfortune of the Jews in England came to an end. They were here more unhappy, if possible, than the German Jews. Before being expelled, they had to pass through every degree of misery. At the accession of the new king, Edward I., they had a prospect of a secure existence, seeing that this monarch, the very reverse of his father, was severe but just, gave them no favours, but also extorted nothing from them, and at any rate was able to protect them from attacks at the hands of the deluded mob. Edward took very great care that the Jews of his land should not be made to suffer or be outraged arbitrarily, and that no injury should be done either to their persons or their property. Thus for a long space of time they would have continued in this humiliated condition, bowed down beneath the burden of the imposts, and wearying themselves to satisfy, through usury, the insatiable demands of the royal treasury, had not an insignificant occurrence made them the object of the bitter hatred of the monks.

In London, there lived a Dominican, named Robert de Rëdingge, who inflamed the minds of the people by his eloquence in the pulpit. He had studied the Hebrew language, on the cultivation

of which so much stress had been laid by the third General of the Order, Raymund de Penja-forte, to enable the monks to convert the Jews from their own writings. But instead of converting them, the preaching friar, Robert de Redingge, became himself converted. He was inspired by such a love for Judaism that he underwent circumcision, assumed the name of Haggai, and married a beautiful Jewess (the summer of 1275). When he was summoned to answer for his apostasy, he defended his new faith with great warmth. King Edward handed him over for punishment to the Archbishop of Canterbury. What was done to him is unknown; but it appears that he, together with his wife, escaped unhurt. The Dominicans were, however, enraged at his conversion, for they considered the apostasy of one of their members as a disgraceful blot upon their Order. Touched to the quick by the mockery of the people and their rivals the Franciscans, who deeply hated them, the preaching friars sought to wreak their vengeance upon the Jews. As the king could not be approached except by some intermediate agent, they brought their influence to bear upon the bigoted, avaricious queen-mother Eleanor, and they succeeded. She made the hatred of the Dominicans against the Jews a personal affair, and did not cease till the English Jews had drunk out the cup of tribulation to the dregs. She followed up this policy in the same year by expelling the Jews from the town of Cambridge, which belonged to her, and personally fostered the hostile feeling against them throughout the whole country, especially among Christian merchants.

There now commenced, against the will of the king, a series of burdensome oppressions, which appear almost incredible, were they not authenticated by the testimony of trustworthy sources. Hitherto Parliament had had nothing to do with the

Jews: they were the king's people, over whom neither the commons nor the nobility had any authority. Just at this time, however, incited by the Dominicans and the queen-mother, the House of Commons passed a statute (called the Statute of Judaism), which breathes the inimical spirit of the Church. It positively prohibited all usury by the Jews. They were only allowed to reside in royal cities and boroughs. If they had to obtain payment for debts from executors, they might not distress beyond the moiety of the debtor's property. Every Jew above the age of twelve was to pay to the king at Easter the sum of threepence. The House of Commons strictly enforced the wearing of their Jew-badge, determined its size and colour (substituting yellow instead of white), and forbade all intercourse with Christians. As an English writer, Tovey, remarks, the Jews in England were treated like their ancestors in Egypt, except that instead of bricks they had to give gold. This comparison is still more correct on this point, that nothing was granted to them, and yet they were obliged to render a complete tale of their burdens. Even for the privilege of trading they had to rely upon the favour of the king, and to pay a price for it.

A favourable opportunity soon presented itself to the enemies of the Jews to strengthen their attacks against them with graver accusations. False coins were in circulation in England, which had been imported from abroad; the coinage of the country was also often clipped. The charge was directed against the Jews, that they were the sole originators and circulators of the counterfeit coins. In consequence of this (on Friday, 17th November, 1278) all the Jews of England, together with their wives and children, were thrown into prison and prevented from returning to their homes. It was afterwards proved that many Christians, and even some noble-

men of London, had been guilty of counterfeiting the coinage of the realm, and that throughout the whole kingdom only 293 Jews had been convicted of the crime of which they were accused. Nevertheless, over 10,000 Jews were made to suffer for this act, and whilst the Christians who were implicated in the offence, with the exception of three, were liberated on payment of a fine, the 293 Jews were hanged, others sentenced to life-long imprisonment, and still others expelled from the country and their possessions confiscated. But the hatred against them was not at an end. Their enemies tried to force them to accept counterfeit money in their business transactions. Unconscientious Christians played upon their fears to extort money from them with the threat that they would denounce them. Edward, who became acquainted with these intrigues, issued a law (May, 1279), which enacted that charges of tampering with the coin of the realm could only be brought forward till the May of the following year, and erected a barrier to all this denunciation.

The enemies of the Jews, however, did not tire of forging new charges against them. It was soon reported that the Jews of Northampton had crucified a Christian child. For this alleged crime many Jews in London were torn asunder by horses, and their corpses hung on the gallows (2nd April, 1279). Next, the Jews were charged with acts of disrespect to the Christian symbols. The king thereupon issued a decree that the blasphemers were to be punished with death. As, however, Edward knew his people, he added that the accused were to receive their punishment only when convicted by the evidence of honest, impartial witnesses of the transgression. In order in a manner to seduce the Jews to blasphemous acts, the Dominicans devised an infamous trick. They approached the king with a view of obtaining

permission to found a mission for the conversion of the Jews, knowing that one or other of them would be transported by zeal for his religion, and would make use of an injurious expression. Edward granted them this concession at the request of the Prior (1280), and warned the Jews to listen to the sermons of the Dominicans patiently, without turbulence, contradiction, or blasphemy. To promote their conversion, the king even brought a sacrifice of money. The extraordinary law, that the Jews who went over to Christianity were to forfeit their property to the treasury, Edward partly abrogated, and decreed that they might retain a half. He moreover ordered the erection of a house for converts of the Jewish race, and endowed it with a revenue, which however flowed mainly into the pockets of the overseer. A scholastic philosopher of that time suggested yet another means for the conversion of the Jews. The celebrated Franciscan monk, Duns Scotus (Professor at Oxford, afterwards in Paris and Cologne), who had nurtured his mind with the thoughts of the Jewish philosopher Gebirol, held that it was the duty of the king, if he wished to exercise his Christian zeal, to tear Jewish children violently away from their parents, and cause them to be educated in the Christian faith. Still more, it was perfectly justifiable to force the parents themselves, by all sorts of terrors, to submit to baptism. How much respect the Jews entertained for the Christianity of the worldly-minded and rapacious popes, ferocious princes, and sensual monks, is shown by a peculiar incident. A Jewess complained to the king that her own and her husband's enemies had defamed her by calling her a convert, and she entreated him to secure her redress for this insult. Whilst the queen-mother, Eleanor, was exerting herself at the instance of the Dominicans to inflame the king and the people against the Jews, the queen, likewise called

Eleanor, bestowed on them her favour. She prayed the king to confer the vacant Chief Rabbinate of the English congregation on her favourite Hagin (Chayim) Denlaches. The king granted her prayer, and installed Hagin as Chief Rabbi, with all the powers and privileges which his predecessors had enjoyed (15th May, 1281).

When the king settled the Chief Rabbinate of England on Hagin and his heirs, he had no thought of expelling the Jews from his kingdom. Gradually, however, the fanatical party and his mother gained more influence over him, and disturbed his clear perception. This party in England, probably the Dominicans, appeared before the newly-elected Pope, Honorius IV., with the serious accusations against the Jews, that they not only fostered a friendly intercourse with the Christians, but that they encouraged the return of baptised Jews to Judaism, invited Christians on Sabbath and festivals to the synagogue, made them bend the knee before the Torah, and enticed them to adopt their customs. The Pope accordingly sent a missive to the Archbishop of York and his legate, bidding them employ every means to put a stop to this improper conduct. On the 16th of April, 1287, an assembly of the Church was held in Exeter, which renewed all the hateful canonical resolutions against the Jews. Fourteen days later (2nd May) the king for the second time ordered the arrest of numbers of English Jews with their wives and children, an act for which no cause could be assigned by any one. Nor did he release them until he received a large ransom for them. Three years later, 1290, Edward, instigated by his mother, issued an edict on his own authority, without consent of Parliament, that all the Jews of England were to be banished from the country. They were given till the first of November to change their goods into money. Any Jew found on

English ground after that date was to be hanged. They had nevertheless to restore all pledges of Christian debtors to their owners before that time. Edward was still mild enough to strongly impress upon his officials that they should not molest them on their departure, and warned the shippers of the five ports not to insult them. Although their respite lasted till the 1st of November, the 16,511 Jews of England left the country by the 9th of October. The immoveable property, which they could not carry with them, fell to the lot of the king. In spite of the king's warning, the expelled Jews were exposed to all sorts of abuses. One ship's captain, who was commissioned to convey several families down the Thames to the sea, ran the ship against a sandbank, and made them disembark until the rising of the tide. When the tide began to return, he re-embarked on his ship with his sailors, sailed away, and called out scornfully to the despairing Jews, "Let them cry unto Moses, who led their ancestors safely through the Red Sea, to bring them to dry land." The unhappy people perished in the waves. This affair came to the ears of the judges, and the ringleaders were hanged as murderers. How many similar incidents may have occurred and remained unpunished? The Jews of Gascony, which at that time belonged to England, were also expelled. The banished Jews directed their steps towards France, which lay next to Gascony. There they were at first received by Philip IV., le Bel. But soon after a command was issued by the king and Parliament in common that the Jews who had been driven out of England and Gascony were to leave the French territory by Lent. Thus once more were they compelled to set out on their pilgrimage; some of them went to Germany, and the others to North Spain.

As if an evil destiny had pursued the sons of

Jacob, like a shadow never leaving them for a moment, the short spell of fortune enjoyed through Saad-Addaula by the Jews of Asia soon turned. The physician of the Grand Khan of Persia had drawn attention to the fraudulent conduct of the finance officials; for which service he had at first been appointed commissary, and sent to Bagdad to investigate the condition of the revenue, and to bring the fraudulent administrators to account (end of 1288). Saad-Addaula succeeded in restoring the revenues to such order, that he was able to remit to the Grand Khan Argun considerable sums, on which he had never reckoned. Argun, who loved gold, was satisfied with his Jewish commissary in the highest degree, and distinguished him by all possible marks of honour. As Saad-Addaula acted disinterestedly, and was concerned only for the good of his master, he was able continually to put larger sums of money into the treasury, and thus won for himself ever more favour from this great Khan. Ultimately Argun appointed him minister of finance for the whole Iranian (Persian) empire, and conferred on him the honourable title of Saad-Addaula, "Support of the Empire" (Summer, 1288). He adopted the rule of employing only Jews and Christians in offices, as he disliked Mahometans on account of their rebellious attitude. It was natural that Saad-Addaula should now specially consider his relatives, for he had been most zealously assisted by them in his difficult office. Through the fidelity with which Saad-Addaula served his master, he won so much confidence, that nearly all state affairs went through his hands, and he had the power even of coming to decisions without referring the points to the great Khan. Probably through his instrumentality and advice Argun established diplomatic connections with Europe, and even with the Pope. Through the help of the Europeans, the

Mahometans were to have been driven out of Cis-Asia and particularly out of Palestine. The Pope, however, flattered himself that Argun would become a member of the Catholic Church.

The Jewish minister, indeed, deserved the high favour with which Argun honoured him. Where hitherto there had prevailed license and abuse of power in the empire, he introduced law and order. The military commandants were forbidden to interfere with the administration of justice, the legal tribunals were admonished to protect the weak and innocent. As the Mongols had established no judicial code, Saad-Addaula put the Mahometan laws into force, as far as they bore upon the civil and penal administration of justice. The peaceful portion of the population blessed him on account of the security of life and property for which they were indebted to him. Saad-Addaula also patronised learning, settled rich incomes upon learned men and poets, and encouraged them to literary undertakings. In consequence he was sung and praised by men of letters in prose and verse.

The Eastern Jews felt themselves happy and exalted through the elevation of their co-religionist to the highest post of the empire. From the most remote countries there flowed a stream of Jews to the Persian Khanate, to bask in the favour of the Jewish minister. They said with one mouth, God has elevated this man in the latter days as a voucher for the Lord of Redemption and for sustaining our hope. The new-Hebrew poetry, which had arisen in the East, but had sunk into jarring discord or become altogether silent, appears to have recovered itself again in his time, in order to proclaim his glory.

Saad-Addaula, however, had aroused many and powerful enemies through his resolute administration and love of justice and order. The Mahometans, who were shut out of every office, beheld, with

deep vexation, Jews and Christians, whom they were accustomed to despise as infidel dogs, in possession of the government. They were, moreover, urged on by their priests and learned men to a most violent hatred of the Jewish statesman, to whom they imputed their humiliation. They accordingly spread the report that Saad-Addaula was contemplating the establishment of a new religion, and the proclamation of the great Khan as the religious lawgiver and prophet. To excite their bigotry still more, they reported that Saad-Addaula had completed preparations for an expedition to Mecca, to transform the hallowed abode of the Kaaba into an idolatrous temple and to compel the Mahometans once more to become heathens. The order of the Ishmaelite murderers, the Assassins, which was organised for the purpose of putting to death actual or supposed enemies of Islam, immediately made arrangements clandestinely to remove Saad-Addaula and his relatives from their path. But their plot was betrayed, and it was frustrated by him.

The Jewish minister had many opponents even among the Mongols. The military commandants were incensed against him, because he had laid a restraint upon their license. A conspiracy was hatched even in Mongolian circles. It was given out that he had commissioned a Jew, Neglib-Eddin, to proceed to Chorassan and put to death two hundred of the most distinguished Mongolians; and that his relative, Shem-Addaula, had received instructions to remove many priests and chiefs of the city. Unfortunately, Argun fell seriously ill (November, 1290), and his sickness was a signal for the discontented to make a conspiracy against Saad-Addaula and his adherents. The minister in vain exerted all efforts to secure the recovery of the Khan, for he saw that the latter's death meant his own. He even sent a messenger secretly to

Argun's son to ensure his speedy return to the Court, in order that he might seize the crown immediately after his father's death. When they received intimation of these precautionary measures, the Mongolian magnates, who observed that Argun's end was near, pushed forward the accomplishment of their conspiracy. They executed Saad-Addaula (March, 1291), and slew all Argun's favourites. The conspirators thereupon despatched messengers to all provinces, ordered Saad-Addaula's relatives to be thrown into chains, their property to be confiscated, and their wives and children to be sold as slaves. The Mahometan population also fell upon the Jews in every city of the empire to wreak their vengeance upon them for the degradation which they had suffered from the Mongolians. In Bagdad it came to pitched battles between the Mahometans and the Jews, and many were killed and wounded on both sides.

Two months later the great Jewish community of St. Jean d'Acre (Acco), which had been excited to a tumult by Solomon Petit, was completely blotted out. The Egyptian sultan, Almalek Alashraf, undertook a warlike expedition to drive the last crusaders out of Palestine and Syria. He besieged the fortified city of Acco for more than a month, and then took it by storm (18th May, 1291). Not only were all the Christians executed, but many Jews who happened to be in the city met the same fate. Others were cast into prison, and among them Isaac of Acco, a zealous but unintellectual Kabbalist, whose candour forced him, much against his will, to regard the halo of divinity, with which the Kabbala had encircled itself, as mere masquerading.



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